Eating Disorders: A Parents’ Guide
R. Bryant-Waugh & B. Lask

Anyone who has worked with parents of young sufferers from eating disorders will be familiar with the sense of despair and helplessness that is often experienced, and with the confusion of contradictory advice that has been offered. A clearly and confidently written guide to eating disorders for parents is long overdue, and this book amply fulfils this need. Its focus is quite appropriately on the disorders of young people of school age and above, but within this age group the full range of eating difficulties are considered.

The initial overview of eating disorders offers sensible reassurance regarding the lesser varieties of problems, such as episodic restriction and overeating, and faddiness, while not underplaying the seriousness of more formal disorders. Parental guilt and hopelessness can be major obstacles to change, and the chapter on the causes of eating disorders gives rather less emphasis to biologically predetermined explanations than to models of disorder in which active interventions by family and professionals can make substantial contributions to recovery. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the role of the family tensions is presented more as a perpetuating rather than precipitating factor.

The descriptions of signs and symptoms of eating disorders are clear and accurate, while the second half of the book provides a guide to parental action, which is of particular value. This section builds on the idea that eating disorders can be understood, and therefore the sufferer should be seen to be struggling with an internal conflict between a healthy and disordered self rather than simply blamed for causing trouble. The statements of ‘crucial principles’ and fundamental practical points are helpfully repeated at the end of this section.

Finally, the book covers the interface with professional help, emphasising the importance of parents being able to provide an accurate history of their child’s eating behaviour, and of persisting when their concerns are too easily dismissed, by GPs for example. Warning is given of some of the side effects of treatment, such as the escalation in the conflict between parents and the young person as anorexia is confronted. Throughout the book the points are illustrated with numerous case vignettes, whose authenticity is vividly apparent in their concise presentation. I have already recommended this book to several parents, and I am sure I will continue to do so for a long time to come.

Paul Flower
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Violence in American Schools
D. S. Elliot, B. A. Hamburg & K. R. Williams (Eds.)

The editors have brought together a wide range of experts from diverse disciplines who collectively bring understanding, direction and purpose to the common cause of both the reduction of violence and the fear of violence in the particular setting of school. The solutions suggested by the authors writing from the perspectives of public health, criminology, ecology and developmental psychology are a welcome beacon of light during a time frame when fatalities have unfortunately continued to darken the lives of children, teachers and parents in North America.

The increasing lethality, more random nature of violence and fewer safe places largely account for the high levels of fear experienced by both children and adults. The focus of this volume is on violence prevention, utilising the body of research findings on delinquent behaviour in general—applying the findings to children and early onset aggression and later acts of violence.

Five themes are interwoven into the research perspective of each chapter: the interconnectedness of family, peer group, school and neighbourhood, the dynamic interaction between individuals and social contexts in the process of development, the critical importance of collaboration in any effective prevention efforts, the need for a public health approach to violence prevention, and a detailed account of effective programmes and strategies for preventing violence.

The authors of the individual chapters and editors make the body of research knowledge digestible and applicable to day-to-day practice, infusing a sense of purpose, hope and determination into the reduction of violence in the context of schools, not just in North America but throughout Europe. This book is valuable, to those working in schools, child and adolescent mental health teams, in social care and in the youth justice system, and will find resonance in England and Wales with the mandate to work collaboratively, in multi-disciplinary Youth Offending Teams.

Susan Bailey
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Psychology and Social Care
D. Messer & F. Jones (Eds.)

This substantial text sets out to review key concepts and empirical evidence from the discipline of psychology and to show how this can be applied to the activities of social care professionals, mainly social workers. In order to achieve these aims, contributors have been asked to summarise their knowledge and theory in relation to issues of relevance in social care (such as occupational stress or discrimination) or to particular client groups (e.g., people with learning difficulties or those who commit crimes).

The choice of themes from social care rather than from psychology means that the text provides a wealth of material that is of much more interest to practitioners in the field than most conventional psychology texts. As there are 24 chapters, in addition to the Conclusion, a good range of topics is covered. Inevitably, the choice of what to include or leave out is somewhat arbitrary. Children and young people are given particular attention, with seven chapters compared to one on the psychology of ageing and one specifically on older people that focuses on dementia.

Apart from chapters on organisations, stress and ethnicity, the emphasis is on understanding clients, rather than pro-
The book is largely successful in bringing together a wide array of knowledge in a clear and accessible manner. With few exceptions, it is good at showing how this can be applied in practice. The editors and some contributors evidently tried hard. For example, most chapters include discussion points aimed at practitioners. Although a few chapters simply address their subject with barely a nod towards its applicability, most include brief reference to duties and actions for social workers. However, the linkages are hampered by the fact that only two writers have a social work background. The rest are nearly all academic psychologists, plus a few clinical psychologists and professors of education. This means that they are rarely able to show how their conclusions might be useful to practitioners. Mostly, the implicit message is ‘This is what we psychologists know about this topic, can you – the social care reader – try and see how to use this in your work’.

Greater involvement of social care contributors would have enhanced the book. Just one chapter (on risk assessment) is jointly written by a psychologist and a social worker, and this interweaves practice examples well. The chapter on attachment failure includes the significant body of social work writings by Jewett, Fahlberg, Howe and others that has integrated understandings of attachment, separation and loss with insights and techniques for helping separated children and their families. On the other hand, some chapters review information available on their topics from any source (e.g., the law, social work, psychiatry, even occasionally sociology) so that the specific ‘psychology’ contribution is not always apparent.

Despite shortcomings, this substantial tome should prove an excellent sourcebook for social care students, while many psychology students would also gain from seeing how their subject contributes to understanding a number of social issues and problems.

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Adolescent Psychiatry
(Volumes 22 & 23)
A. H. Esman, L. T. Flaherty & H. A. Horowitz (Eds.)

The collection of papers in these two volumes give an excellent account of the current views and approaches to adolescent development and disorder within a psycho-dynamic framework, predominantly in North America. They contain an acknowledgment of the important contributions to adolescent psychiatry of Sherman Feinstein, Peter Blos and Derek Miller, all recently deceased. It is worth noting that Derek Miller worked as medical director of the adolescent unit at the Tavistock Clinic in the 1960s before emigrating to the United States.

Volume 22 starts with papers examining adolescent development in relation to creativity. They take the reader into the realm of the creative potential of adolescence. The adolescent process is seen as the melting pot of powerful emotions that make the fabric of a great deal of works of art. Shakespeare’s contribution in identifying the struggles of adolescents is highlighted, showing that, after all, adolescent conflicts in his era were not very different from those of today. One paper examines, interestingly, a particular construction of adolescence, based on Nietzsche’s philosophy, as a phase where there are heroic expectations and the despising of ordinary life.

Another section of this volume deals with clinical issues, including eating, conduct disorders, narcissistic and anti-social pathology and violence. The chapter on eating disorders focuses on issues of identity and dependency/autonomy conflicts. The contributions on anti-social behaviour and violence have, as a central theme, processes of dehumanisation during adolescence and trace their genesis in earlier experiences.

The third part of the volume deals with the current pre-occupation with the impact of violence in society on adolescents, touching on issues such as the reaction of Israeli adolescents to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the consequences of trauma on adolescents in Bosnia, and the complexity of offering therapeutic help to these teenagers. One chapter offers a broad psychosocial framework for the understanding of juvenile violence.

Volume 23 contains 4 sections. The first reviews classical psychoanalytical theories, particularly by Blos, Anna Freud and Mahler, in the light of Kohutian Self Psychology. It challenges the concept of adolescence as a process of separation/individuation based on giving up childhood claims and puts forward a view of the adolescent process as a period of transformation and modification of the internal representations formed in childhood. A chapter in this section attempts to integrate current neuro-biological findings, in particular of the orbital-frontal cortex and its functions, with a psychoanalytic perspective. How traumatic experiences can disrupt development through interfering with neuro-biological and psychic functioning is interestingly described. On the whole, this section is a worthwhile endeavour at integrating psychodynamic thinking with current neuro-biological and psychosocial research.

The section on psychopathological issues deals with only substance abuse and the relationship between psychosomatic symptoms and depression. One chapter highlights a treatment model for substance abuse for teenagers who can be engaged in the programme while the other concludes that there is no evidence for the hypothesis that psychosomatic symptoms mask clinical depression.

The section on psychotherapeutic issues contains a chapter on the crucial issues of establishing a therapeutic alliance with adolescence in two detailed and poignantly described case studies. Both cases focus on the struggles of the two adolescents to achieve autonomy and show how the presenting psychopathology can be linked to failed attempts in this process. The impact of this work on the therapist is painstakingly described and this illustrates well the risk for the therapist of becoming involved in repeating previous and unhelpful patterns of interaction between the adolescent and parents.

The last section of volume 23 deals with school based preventative programmes, ranging from AIDS prevention, interventions following adolescent suicide, to
school based mental health and a psychotherapy service at a boarding school. They illustrate convincingly the potential benefits of interventions that involve the environment where teenagers spend a lot of their time. The authors of the chapter ‘School Based Mental Health Services’ conclude: ‘The outcomes of school based mental health services are promising in terms of clinical symptom reduction, school success indicators, and stakeholder satisfaction. A multidisciplinary, multi-agency inter-professional team approach to service delivery is an effective way of integrating diverse resources and bringing them to bear upon the mental health problems of children and families’ (p. 229).

In conclusion, I found these two volumes thought provoking, rich in clinical experience and innovative approaches within a psychodynamic framework. They show a good balance between clinical work and research. They will be useful reading for professionals working with adolescents, and libraries attached to the departments of child and adolescent psychiatry should have a copy for reference.

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Applying Psychology in the Classroom
J. Leadbetter, S. Morris, P. Timmins, G. Knight & D. Traxson

This short book is written by members of the educational psychology training team at Birmingham University for newly qualified primary teachers and teachers who are interested in the application of psychological based approaches in the classroom. Topics include physical and social aspects of classroom learning, stress reduction and motivation. There is a welcome emphasis on listening to children. There are helpful references and suggestions for further reading, but no index. It will be a useful introduction for teachers, and also for other professionals, as an insight into their child clients’ lives at school.

David Galloway
University of Durham

Ethics for Psychologists: A Handbook
R. D Francis

There is remarkably little written about ethics that is of practical use to psychologists and other professionals. This book aims to provide instruction on the basis of ethics, outline the principles of reasoning behind the identification and resolution of ethical dilemmas and provide a ready reference for those beset by those dilemmas. Above all, it is a practical book that uses examples liberally in the text and provides a battery of case illustrations to be used as material for teaching. It is written for psychologists in general and encompasses industrial and occupational psychology. This broad focus means that it sometimes lacks a depth in the analysis of cases. The author is not only concerned to increase awareness of ethical issues but also to provide the psychologist with advice that will enhance self-protection and avoid career-damaging pitfalls. There is, for example, a particular section devoted to ‘whistle-blowing’. Although the author is from Australia he is familiar with the British system and draws from the North American and European contexts as well as from Australia and New Zealand.

Part One examines conceptual and legal issues and looks at the different kinds of ethical codes. It discusses whether codes should be prescriptive or proscriptive and whether the focus should be on behaviour or intention. There is a stress on the need for codes together with an ethical committee and a system of reporting on ethical issues and breaches of the code. There is also an emphasis on the need for training and it is in this area that the book is particularly useful as it raises many questions. It identifies issues such as the ethical relevance of continued professional development, the identification of the client, the relevance of a psychologist’s private life on the domain of professional practice and whether an ethical code should be bound by time, circumstance or culture. It raises questions such as how long can it be before a psychologist forms a personal relationship with a client? This section outlines a number of philosophical positions, e.g., utilitarianism, which are important sources for debate about ethics.

Part Two concentrates on practical issues and keeps a useful focus on the context in which the psychologist operates including a section on ‘being ethical in an unethical environment’. It puts forward the key principles of dignity, equability, prudence, honesty, openness and goodwill and looks at instances where these principles may be in conflict. There is a useful compendium of ethical issues at the end of the book.

I would recommend this book as a useful, practical introduction to ethics for the psychologist and other practitioners. It provides a wealth of helpful information, raises many questions and is a useful resource for teaching. It does lack a certain depth in some of the case analyses and this must be partly due to its broad geographical focus. It does not deal with cultural context in any great detail and only touches briefly on research ethics. However, it opens up the subject in a very accessible way and hopefully will encourage more reflection, teaching and debate in this crucial dimension of practice.

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Medical Art Therapy With Children
C. A. Malchiodi (Ed.)

Medical Art Therapy is a term applied to ‘the use of art expression with individuals who are physically ill, experiencing trauma to the body, or who are undergoing aggressive medical treatment’. This is apparently the first book in this field, and is a collection of papers by a group of eminent art therapists under the editorship of Malchiodi, whose definition is quoted above.

Chapters are devoted to specific medical conditions and contributors demonstrate their familiarity with children and adolescents with eating disorders, cancer patients, children who have asthma, HIV and AIDS, and children in hospital with severe burns. It is a compelling demonstration of how specific medical conditions and therapeutic procedures can form an important context within which the art therapist can work.

However, the strength of the work lies, in my view, in the description of principles of art therapy through which a sick child can be helped to form a concept of his body image and physical symptoms, and helped to enhance his body-mind relationship. We see vividly illustrated how a young patient
can be encouraged to gain a sense of control over his or her predicament and environment, how communication within the family may be enhanced, and how this sharing of information can enable the carer to develop more accurate awareness of the child’s own perception of disease and the pain it brings. Often children, particularly younger children, feel guilty about their illnesses, thinking it is the consequence of their bad behaviour or their own sins. We see here, however, how art therapy can alter these beliefs.

This is pre-eminently a book for professionals—psychologists, counsellors, play therapists and art therapists—working with physically ill children, but it is also a valuable source for all those interested in the growing research literature of art therapy.

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Reading Development and the Teaching of Reading. A Psychological Perspective
J. Oakhill & R. Beard (Eds.)

This book originated from a special issue of the Journal of Research in Reading, and many of the chapters are amended versions of papers presented in that issue. It aims to ‘counterweight recent social and anthropological views of literacy’ by illustrating how scientific experimental research contributes to the understanding of reading and its development. The downside of such an approach is that the book takes on a rather defensive stance. Conversely, by marshalling their knowledge and understanding in order to ‘present the case’, the authors have produced detailed, coherent and very readable overviews of some of the most central aspects of reading development.

There are 11 chapters in the book. The initial chapter, by Gough, sets the scene of the debate. Stanovich and Stanovich, in the following chapter, seek rapprochement between the whole language and phonics reading protagonists, but identify two main areas of difference; in teaching and learning phonics and whether children are naturally predisposed towards written language acquisition. They cite well-supported empirical research to argue convincingly that whole language advocates should reconstitute their position in a scientifically respectable way. Perfetti also outlines the contribution of cognitive research, and how findings from converging research can inform reading instruction.

I particularly enjoyed Ehri’s chapter in which she describes the four phases of development in learning to read words. She clearly highlights the implications for reading instruction, integrating these into the text, whereas in other chapters the implications for teaching seem to be an ‘add on’. It is rather incongruous that Ehri goes to some lengths to emphasise that her theory is one of phases rather than stages (p. 83), yet the Editors refer to Ehri’s chapter as outlining a four stage model of reading development.

The chapters by Stuart, Masterson and Dixon, Carsten Elbro and Byrne and Liberman steer away from the ‘debate’ of the book, to concentrate on their own research findings. Goswami’s chapter is different in two ways. First, she opens her chapter by stating that ‘the importance of phonological skills for reading and spelling development is now widely recognised’, indicating that there is no ‘debate’; that children do need to develop phonological skills as part of literacy acquisition. She also refers to the National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching and English in the National Curriculum. This is the only reference to these two documents despite the book being concerned with the ‘teaching of reading’. The second difference is that Goswami spends part of her chapter defending the importance of rhyme and analogy in reading development. Without the background reading of papers relating to this debate, I think practitioners and students may find this section somewhat perplexing.

The final two chapters by Juel and Adams both give a more descriptive overview of the debate than is provided in the initial chapters. Adams emphasises the vital importance of science and the scientific approach to studying reading and reading development, arguing that what is at issue is ‘method’, and that ‘the outcome of science should be shared with those who can use them to make a difference’.

Thus, while the first chapter of the book is devoted to the ‘debate’, which was the impetus for the book’s existence, the remaining chapters provide evidence in various ways to support the scientific approach. There appears to be no clear link between the chapters other than this. The Editors stress, however, that the book should not be seen as purely a counterweight to recent sociological perspectives on literacy, but also as a means of disseminating recent findings. On balance, the chapters represent more of the dissemination than the debate, and this is in the book’s favour.

Despite these few criticisms, and the many incidences of proof reading errors, I found this an enjoyable book. It provided an accessible, up-to-date overview of current research on children’s reading development. It will be of interest to practitioners and students in providing a better understanding of children’s reading, but may not answer sufficient questions on ‘how to teach it’.

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Violence in Society: The Reality Behind Violent Crime
E. Godsì

First, what this book is not: it is not a text book; it is not a review of the literature on either violence or its culture; it does not present any new theories and perspectives, and it is not a book particularly for clinicians concerned with violent children and adolescents.

Godsì is a clinical psychologist with considerable experience of forensic practice in Rampton and latterly in Nottingham. He knows his violent offenders from inside out and his comments about them are permeated with insight, understanding and compassion. In the book, he attempts to place violence in its ecological context. He brings together aspects of culture, economic and social poverty, child abuse and failure of attachment and the frequently stigmatising behaviour of clinicians, particularly, he believes, psychiatrists who are driven by powerful pharmaceutical companies to seek physical explanations of and remedies for violence.

An appealing feature of the book is the short accounts of history and behaviour of varied forensic cases, including those of the Wests and Thompson and Venables of the Bulger case. In my review copy over 30 pages were duplicated. This is one instance of generally poor editing of the book that, with page-long paragraphs, makes it less easy to read.
Nevertheless, the book is a reasonable compendium of the prevailing socio-psychological perspectives on violence and may thus serve as a useful introduction to the topic, particularly for social workers and clinical trainees.

Masud S. Hoghughi
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Focus on the Use of Stimulants in Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Primary Evidence-Based Briefing No. 1
C. Joughin & M. Zwi

Evidence based medicine is clearly all the rage and, in the UK at least, has strong Government support. It is likely, therefore, that this publication will already be in in-trays and libraries around the UK and Ireland. In presentation, it is a ring-bound ‘document’ rather than a book and suffers from spelling mistakes and typographical errors such as one might find in ‘in-house’ productions. Most people, I suspect, will have dipped into it, rather than read it from cover to cover as this reviewer has done. How, then, can a review be useful?

First, it can help in emphasising the ‘beginning bits’ that might otherwise be missed, such as a page of warnings and a section introducing ‘evidence-base briefings’. An evidence-base briefing is not a set of guidelines, nor a set of systemic reviews but a ‘guide to promote thought’. This is confusing as the document does include guidelines and appears to review areas of interest.

The format is appealing. In addition to the general sections on Key Issues, the Not-Guidelines-Guidelines, and Understanding Research Methods, the bulk of the document gathers together research papers under specific ‘clinical questions’, all of which are very interesting. A selection of references under each question is subjected to a ‘grid’ of summarising the research, including important issues about the study design and additional comments from a (later named) reviewer. It felt particularly important to have the names of the experts as one can then put their comments into the context of their views expounded in other places. This also explains the wide variation in style of comment from the almost laid back to the three exclamation-mark emphases last seen in teen magazines!!!

This reviewer is not really sure it is fair to ask experts to offer comments on their own research papers – as occurred for a least one of the papers. Also, one might have doubts about the selection of papers, given that in certain of the grids the comments were of the ‘I wouldn’t have chosen this one…there are better’ type.

Notwithstanding the above, this is a useful exercise, probably best regarded as a novel way of presenting a series of journal clubs by esteemed colleagues. It is a starting point for exploration with an introduction to critical appraisal. This exercise could perhaps be usefully extended via the World Wide Web, using the same grids so that readers can ‘do the same’ with other papers, with space allowed for additional comments. Further clinical questions could also be posed. It is not clear whether this more interactive exercise is planned.

Overall, this is a worthwhile contribution to Continuing Professional Development, but more as a catalyst for discussion than to offer ‘definitive answers’ to questions posed.

Paul Laking
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Books by Members

M. Chakrabarti & M. Hill. (Eds.) Residential Child Care. International Perspectives on Links with Families and Peers

A. Clarke & A. Clarke
Early Experience and the Life Path

HoNOSCA Health of the National Outcome Scales. Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Video Workshop and Trainer’s Guide. Enquiries and orders to HoNOSCA Project, University of Liverpool, Section of Adolescent Psychiatry, Academic Unit, Pine Lodge, 79 Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1AW. (Tel: 01244 364660 Fax: 01244 364659).

D. Gupta & R. Gupta (Eds.)
Psychology for Psychiatrists

A. Klin, F. R. Volkmar & S. Sparrow
(Eds.)
Asperger Syndrome

B. Lask & R. Bryant-Waugh
(Eds.)
Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence

A. Lau
(Ed.)
South Asian Children and Adolescents in Britain. Ethnic-cultural Issues

P. Mitchell & K. J. Riggs
Children’s Reasoning and the Mind

A. Rushton
Adoption as a Placement Choice: Arguments and Evidence

D. Shaffer, C. P. Lucas & J. E. Richters (Eds.)
Diagnostic Assessment in Child and Adolescent Psychopathology

H. Steele & J. Cassidy (Eds.)
Attachment and Human Development (Journal) Volume 1, No. 1.
London: Routledge, 1999. pp. 136. £140.00 Institutional, £40.00 Individual (3 issues per year).