

by the concepts, it provides a useful information source, albeit one which is most likely to be dipped in and out of rather than read from cover to cover.

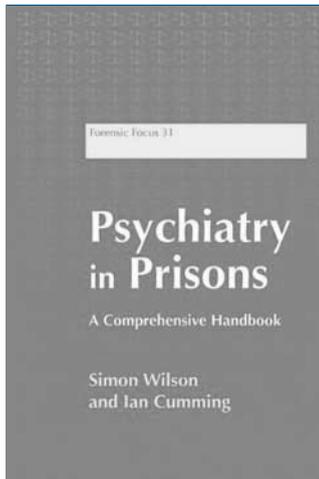
**Mark Potter** Consultant Psychiatrist, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Springfield University Hospital, 61 Glenburnie Road, London SW17 7DJ, UK. Email: mark.potter@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk

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anyone commencing training or already working in the forensic field. It will not lessen the challenge but will surely offer a firm foundation from which to start.

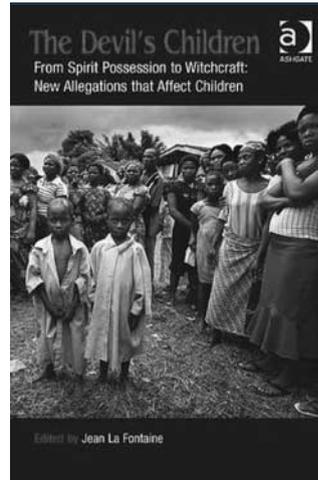
**Martin Humphreys** Hillis Lodge, Hollymoor Way, Northfield, Birmingham B31 5HE, UK. Email: martin.humphreys@bsmhft.nhs.uk

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### Psychiatry in Prisons: A Comprehensive Handbook

Edited by Simon Wilson  
& Ian Cumming.  
Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 2009.  
£34.99 (pb). 320pp.  
ISBN: 9781843102236



### The Devil's Children. From Spirit Possession to Witchcraft: New Allegations that Affect Children

Edited by Jean La Fontaine.  
Ashgate. 2009.  
£55 (hb). 220pp.  
ISBN: 9780754667339

Is the subtitle here an oxymoron? I thought about this for some time. But that was before I started to read. Then the question became redundant as the real worth of this volume shone through. It is part of the Forensic Focus series which, as the introductory note states, 'takes the field of Forensic Psychotherapy as its focal point'. This, I would argue, is not really the case here, as I believe both the series editor and those responsible for this particular number might agree. There are thought-provoking chapters on ethical difficulties associated with the delivery of psychiatric care in prisons and a fascinating one on the use of language in penal settings. But what the book does do, to my mind at least, is represent a significant achievement and a milestone in writing about the practice of psychiatry in what can at times be the most difficult of environments.

The book's format makes it easy to read and there is relatively little repetition of material, which is no mean feat where multiple authors are involved. In the few instances where repetition does occur it is actually appropriate and helpful. The chapters are kept short, one suspects intentionally, and very much to the point. As a consequence they are packed with information, both theoretical and practical in most instances. Subjects covered range from prison history, present-day service structure and processes; through health screening, suicide, substance misuse, healthcare and therapeutic regimes, and the production of reports; to the various offender groups, consent to treatment, capacity and the UK Mental Health Act. There are particularly valuable and interesting contributions on hunger strikes and food refusal as well as deaths in custody. There is some variation in style from section to section but not in a way that detracts from the content. I was a little uncertain about the chapters offering an international perspective as they relate only to the USA and New Zealand. That said, what makes this book so powerful is that all the contributors have in the past worked, or still do, right at the coalface, thus imbuing the writing with a sense of credibility and authority.

I would hold that this book should be read by any psychiatrist who has worked, or intends to work, in a prison, as well as by

This book started badly for me. It got better but, let down by the variable quality of the contributions, left a sense of disappointment at the end. The cover shows two miserable and poor-looking Black children surrounded by a group of Black adults staring at them. When my 12-year-old daughter looked at this cover and said, 'Oh those poor African children, I feel sorry for them', I thought, 'Oh dear, another book that paints ethnic minorities as backward, with their children in need of saving'. But as I started reading I was pleasantly surprised to find a much more nuanced analysis.

The book tries to shed light on recent distressing revelations that have hit the headlines in British papers about the (sometimes fatal) abuse of children who have been accused by their carers of being possessed by dangerous demonic powers. Bringing together contributions from academics from social sciences, psychiatry and anthropology backgrounds, with traditional practitioners, social workers, police and others is both a strength and a problem in this book. It is a strength for the breadth of different perspectives, but a problem because the accounts vary considerably in style, scholarly evaluation and quality of writing, making it difficult to put the book down having arrived at some coherent understanding of the topic.

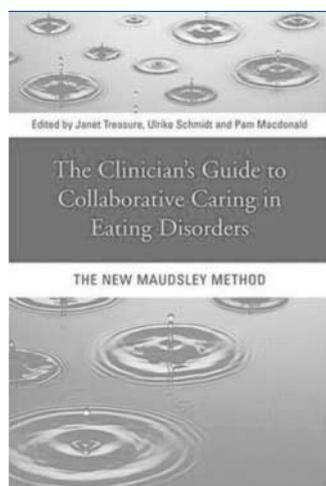
Many of the contributions come from two conferences organised by 'Inform', an organisation based at the London School of Economics and Political Science and supported by a number of organisations including the British government, with the aim of providing information about minority religions, faith movements and spiritual communities. The book is divided into three parts, each with several chapters. The first part, 'The meaning of possession', looks at 'possession states' in different traditions and how these have changed historically across cultures. The second part, 'Possession as contact with the divine', includes personal accounts of becoming 'possessed' by 'supernatural' entities. The

third part, 'Children accused', deals specifically with possession in children.

Overall, I think the book strives to reach a balanced view, neither minimising the potential dangers of children being accused of possession or witchcraft, nor exaggerating the likelihood of this happening and always striving to keep this phenomenon within a broader context. It seems that it is relatively new and something that has developed in the context of some communities struggling with severely disrupted social and community cohesion.

**Sami Timimi** Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Director of Medical Education, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and Visiting Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of Lincoln, Child and Family Services, Ash Villa, Willoughby Road, Sleaford NG34 8QA, UK. Email: sami.timimi@lht.nhs.uk

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### The Clinician's Guide to Collaborative Caring in Eating Disorders: The New Maudsley Method

Edited by Janet Treasure, Ulrike Schmidt & Pam Macdonald.  
Routledge. 2010.  
£24.99 (pb). 304pp.  
ISBN: 9780415484251

This latest book from Janet Treasure exemplifies practice-based collaborative research hand in hand with evidence-based practice in eating disorders. It bridges the dangerous gap between adolescent and adult services with an integration of the best understanding from both sides and draws on work from the addictions, psychoses, obsessive-compulsive disorder, genetics, cognitive psychology, and a range of psychotherapeutic models. The authors have also learnt from patients and carers. Both this book and its predecessor, *Skills-Based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder*,<sup>1</sup> can be read by professionals as well as lay carers without feeling either patronised or mystified.

Parts 1 and 2 provide a scholarly but concise overview that should be read by everyone embarking on work with individuals with eating disorders. Readers should quickly observe that professional carers are as vulnerable as family to the destructive responses which eating disorders elicit to divide and rule the opposition. All psychiatrists – indeed all healthcare professionals – should read Emma Baldock's chapter on ethico-legal aspects of working with carers. It is a lucid discussion of respect for autonomy within an interpersonal setting.

Part 3, the 'meat' of the manual, is centred on developing a shared formulation of the individual's disorder. We understand how the genetically inherited anxiety and inflexibility that predispose to eating disorders will be shared by other family members, which may amplify and perpetuate the disorder. Therefore, it benefits all to learn to contain extreme emotions. This is illustrated with specific scripted vignettes.

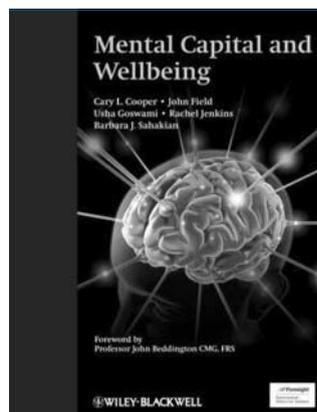
A chapter on pregnancy and parenting includes a useful list of parenting strategies from mothers who have suffered from eating disorders themselves and another chapter emphasises fathers' contributions. Two excellent checklists are also included, which I shall use with all our families henceforth to highlight the particular traps that eating disorders set for us all.

A young doctor summarised in the *BMJ* her experience of anorexia in a single word, isolation.<sup>2</sup> Here, in 300 pages, is the wisdom of a clinical and research community urging us to collaborate in the task of bringing patients and families back into human society.

- 1 Treasure J, Smith G, Crane A. *Skills-Based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder: The New Maudsley Method*. Routledge, 2007.
- 2 McKnight R, Boughton N. A patient's journey: anorexia nervosa. *BMJ* 2009; **339**: b3800.

**Jane Morris** Consultant Psychiatrist, Eden Unit, Royal Cornhill Hospital, Cornhill Road, Aberdeen AB25 2ZH, UK. Email: janemorris1@nhs.net

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### Mental Capital and Wellbeing

Edited by Cary L. Cooper, John Field, Usha Goswami, Rachel Jenkins & Barbara J. Sahakian.  
Wiley-Blackwell. 2009.  
£200 (hb). 1040pp.  
ISBN: 9781405185912

In *Mental Capital and Wellbeing*, Cooper *et al* provide a road map of how society can optimally harness the creativity and mental capacities of its individual members if they (countries and persons) are to be competitive in the globalising, technology- and market-driven world of the 21st century. This is an excellent compendium of papers written to inform policy and practice at the levels of government, industry, academia and the professions in medicine, health and the social sciences.

The volume presents the Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project (a UK project in the Government Office for Science) set up to advise the government and the private sector on how to achieve the best possible mental development and well-being for everyone in the UK ([www.foresight.gov.uk](http://www.foresight.gov.uk)). The project sought to generate an understanding of the science of mental capital and well-being and a vision of the size and nature of future challenges. Analyses of strategic options for addressing the future challenges were conducted and an action plan developed. For background, the project drew upon current research and commissioned reviews of the state of the art of science in medicine, biology, psychiatry, psychology, technology and social science.

Mental capital is defined as 'the totality of an individual's cognitive and emotional resources', and mental well-being as 'a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively . . . build positive relationships . . .