

Black describes the developmental trajectory of antisocial behaviour, specifically focusing on aspects of conduct disorder and its likely persistence into adulthood. Approaches to diagnosis are outlined, with Black providing a list of questions to aid assessment, adding a caveat that 'the reader should resist the temptation to diagnose themselves'. The multi-factional aetiology of antisocial personality disorder is explored in a comprehensive, well-researched and balanced way. He describes the natural history of the disorder and the divergent pathways that are possible, and draws usefully on the work of Robbins and Moffitt. Treatment options are outlined, with particular attention being paid to the treatment of comorbidity. Black takes a practical approach to the challenges of psychological treatment in terms of both efficacy and the impact on patient and therapist alike. The book concludes with advice for families and those suffering from the disorder.

As a child psychiatrist, I found the relatively limited exploration of developmental continuity disappointing and outwith what I was expecting, given the title. In conclusion, this is a book that makes the concept of antisocial personality disorder accessible to the lay person and is useful reading for professionals and trainees within health and criminal justice systems. It is relatively jargon free and accessible to a broad readership, and the concept is brought to life through case studies, including those of high-profile offenders.

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