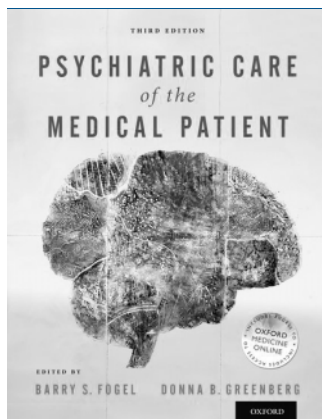


## Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode  
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**Psychiatric Care  
of the Medical Patient,  
3rd edition**

Edited by Barry S. Fogel  
& Donna B. Greenberg  
Oxford University Press. 2015.  
£162.50 (hb). 1812 pp.  
ISBN 9780199731855

Weighing over four kilograms, this book formed a substantial part of my recent luggage allowance, and as such I cannot recommend it for bedtime reading. It is, however, an excellent read and a valuable reference book. The editors write particularly eloquently and have chosen their authors well. The common structure, organisation and summary of main learning points or ‘pearls’ at the end of each chapter, irrespective of subject, are testament to considerable editorial skill, and the finished text reflects that achievement.

The first chapter is a well-written and argued discussion of the priorities in liaison psychiatry, reminding us of just who it is we are treating, and the competing interests in this field. For the clinician embarking on a career in this specialty, the breadth of subjects covered is invaluable, but there is much for the experienced psychiatrist too. This book should also be of considerable benefit to specialists in other medical fields; it might aid better understanding of their patients’ experience and the interplay between physical and psychological factors. Particularly useful was the succinct description of relevant advances in neuro-imaging and other diagnostic investigations, which provided a welcome update.

The breadth of subjects covered does, however, reflect the differences in the American and British healthcare systems. In America it seems possible to offer psychiatric support to a wider range of medical patients, and prescribing habits also differ; some drugs are used for a wider range of conditions, while others have yet to be marketed in the UK and so will be unfamiliar to the British psychiatrist.

This difference is notable in Maldonado’s excellent chapter on delirium. Given the increasing representation of frail old people in all health settings, his extensive 70-page review, which emphasises the bleak prognosis, cognitive sequelae and potentially modifiable risk factors, is particularly pertinent. I could not help feeling that we might make greater progress in this field if this chapter were compulsory reading for all clinicians, irrespective of discipline.

I was also fascinated by the chapter on the role of spirituality and religious beliefs in response to, and recovery from, physical illness. The authors’ discussion of the putative neural basis for the benefits of spiritual and religious belief, irrespective of affiliation, made this a chapter relevant to everyone.

There are too many other excellent sections to mention individually. The hardback version is expensive and very heavy to transport readily, but I would recommend the investment for hospital and departmental libraries. For individuals, thankfully there is also an online version.

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**Clinical Topics in  
Disorders of Intellectual  
Development**

Edited by Marc Woodbury-Smith  
RCPsych Publications. 2015.  
£30.00 (pb). 328 pp.  
ISBN 9781909726390

Between 1996 and 2012 a number of articles about disorders of intellectual development (now the preferred term) were published in *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* (now *BJPsych Advances*). These were well received and it was thought that it would be of value if these articles were updated and additional material added. The result is this volume.

The main aim of this book is to give advice to the clinician about clinical difficulties encountered in people with intellectual disabilities. Many of the chapters assist in this aim; those by Elspeth Bradley and Marika Korossy on behaviour disorders and Neill Simpson and Neil Arnott on linking primary and secondary care are particularly helpful to the practising physician. There are a wide number of possible causes provoking behaviour disturbance in this population and these are summarised extensively in the well-referenced Bradley chapter and in the contributions by Tom Berney and by the editor and Sheila Hollins. Anthony Holland and Jeremy Turk provide valuable background information on classification and behavioural phenotypes respectively, and I learned that the RASopathies (due to anomalies in the Ras/mitogen-activated protein kinase genetic pathway) are associated with hyperactivity.

Shoumitro Deb, writing on psychotropic medication, extensively describes the protocol for employment of these drugs, but details of how to use these drugs in practice is largely confined to clinical impressions. The evidence base for the use of these agents in this population is meagre but I was sorry to read that lithium is not recommended as a mood stabiliser despite the fact that this drug is only one of a handful that is licensed for the treatment of self-injury and aggressive behaviour.

The most entertaining and revealing chapter is by Simon Halstead, who describes frankly his personal experiences working