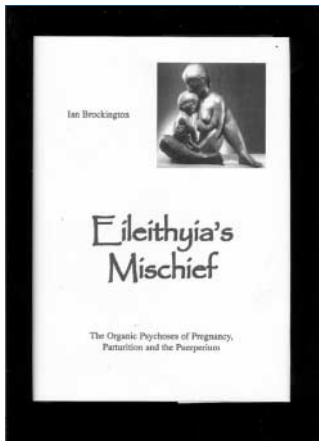


The book attempts to be fairly comprehensive, even including chapters on special issues in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. References vary from chapter to chapter and sources are not always acknowledged; in the case of Sir John Whitmore's 'GROW' model this is a shame because the original work is such a gem. Another issue with respect to comprehensiveness (despite Alistair Burns as co-editor) is its over-emphasis on working age adult (general) psychiatry as compared with old age or child and adolescent work. A little more on the major specialties would have been welcome. Minor criticisms aside, this is a useful work. I can think of no other introduction to management for psychiatrists that is so wide in its scope. Inevitably, in a multi-author book dealing with such a complex and fast-changing situation, it is patchy. Nevertheless, for the final-year trainee, the consultant new to management or the 'old hand' wanting to brush up on areas that have changed in the past few years, it is a welcome and useful 'bench-book'.

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**Eileithyia's Mischief:
The Organic Psychoses
of Pregnancy, Parturition
and the Puerperium**

By Ian Brockington. Eyr. 2006.
£100.00 (hb). 329pp.
ISBN 9780954063320

Before reading this book I had not heard of Eileithyia, divine midwife of the Greeks, never mind her mischief. This may be an indictment of the comprehensive school system but it is not just in relation to the Greek Gods that it provides an important education.

Professor Brockington takes as his subject a group of conditions that, although now rare in the West, represent a major source of morbidity in many parts of the world – the organic psychoses of pregnancy and childbirth. His dedication is to those mothers in Africa, Asia, South and Central America and the Middle East who still suffer from these forgotten diseases.

It is a limited edition of just 100 copies, beautifully hand-bound, self-published and, to borrow a phrase from the lager advert, 'reassuringly expensive'. It is unlikely, therefore, to be a book you will read or even stumble across in your medical bookshop or library. This, I believe, is a shame, as despite the specialised subject area and weight of scholarship it is a surprisingly good read. In addition to chapters considering expected conditions such as infective and eclamptic psychoses, within its covers are fascinating accounts of women with the unusual and sometimes bizarre – unconscious labour, parturient rage and even delivery after death (*Sarggeburt* – coffin birth).

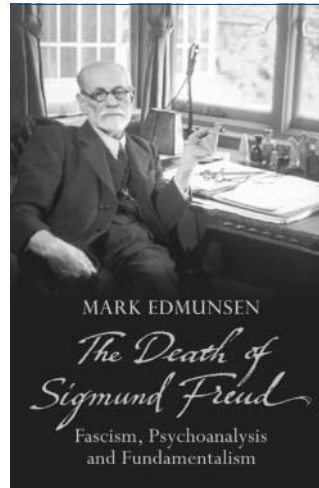
What is most impressive about this book is the depth of research. The author visited 20 countries across 4 continents to consult literature from the past 300 years. On a number of occasions he was the first to cut the pages of important historical publications – one example from 250 years ago. This approach to scholarship has become unusual in the age of internet searches and online publication. It serves as a reminder that 'the literature' is more than what has been published in English in the past dozen years, and of what can still be learnt from carefully documented clinical observations, whenever published.

A vital message is the large number of causes of unusual symptoms or behaviour occurring in relation to childbirth, and the importance of not automatically labelling them as psychological or psychiatric. This lesson is particularly true for those with a psychiatric history and is reinforced by the confidential enquiries into maternal deaths that described a number of deaths where serious medical problems following labour were misdiagnosed as psychiatric problems. It reminds us that, as doctors, a primary task is to make accurate diagnoses.

The author subscribes to the view of M. Paul Bar (1904) whom he quotes in the introduction: 'puerperal mental disorders must be rigorously classified if they are to be studied effectively'. Nosological confusion has led to serious problems in perinatal psychiatry research and must be a priority for the field to address with ICD-11 and DSM-V currently under consideration. Detailed scholarship, such as that evidenced here, can only help us along that road and I look forward to the author's forthcoming book on the puerperal psychoses.

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**The Death
of Sigmund Freud:
Fascism, Psychoanalysis
and Fundamentalism**

Mark Edmunsen. Bloomsbury.
2007. 276pp. £18.99 (hb).
ISBN 9870747586074

When Freud died in September 1939 from a tremendous 20-year battle with cancer and with more than a little help from his family doctor's generous injections of morphine, Londoners were busy preparing for the bombing that would inevitably follow the recent declaration of war with Germany. It is interesting that Mark Edmunsen chooses to highlight Freud's contemporary relevance through a narrative of his death, when so many commentators and psychologists today would gladly have left him buried.

The book is divided in two, telling the story of Freud and Hitler in Vienna in 1938, and then focusing on Freud's last days in exile in London in 1939. Edmunsen's central premise, that

Freud understood clearly how human beings come to abdicate pleasure, freedom and love, and willingly, happily, deliriously subordinate ourselves to authority and power, is intriguingly, even sometimes powerfully, presented, but there is little new in *The Death of Sigmund Freud* for a reader already familiar with Freud and with psychoanalysis.

Edmunsen is particularly compelling when discussing the reluctant importance that being a Jew played in Freud's life, writings and ideology, and when describing how Freud's desire to live and write conflicted with his cancer and weakness for big fat cigars. It is, in short, when Edmunsen humanises Freud that this work is most effective, as a very personal biography, of a particular man marching towards death.

In 'Vienna', Edmunsen shows Freud and Hitler in the same world, walking the same streets, circling one another, but only to show them as completely alien to one another, rather than illustrating the more remarkable case that these were, in fact, two men who did inhabit the same world and walk the same streets. For Freud, the Nazis were not a 'special invention of the Germans' (p. 83), but a particular manifestation of an inevitable human drive. What Edmunsen could have made more apparent is that while they were not a special invention of the Germans, the Nazis were an invention, a technology that was, like the radio or the automobile or the theory of relativity or psychoanalysis itself, particular to a certain culture and point in time. Freud was not surprised that the Nazis came to be a force in Europe because he understood human nature, and also because he understood his age.

That Freud's ideas are relevant today should also not come as a surprise to anyone, and really should hardly need restating, since Freud's world is our world too: a world of fascism and fundamentalism. We flatter ourselves if we think that our world, our problems, our fascists and fundamentalists are so different from his. That all of this is not made immediately apparent in *The Death of Sigmund Freud* is, I think, at least in some part due to the Freud with which Edmunsen presents us. In any biography the subject is reconstructed by the author, though this is truer for no-one more than Sigmund Freud. Edmunsen's chosen Freud is the romantic hero, the man who often stands apart and rebels against the petty restrictions and regulations of his culture. Since Freud, or at least a part of Freud, liked to see himself in this way, Edmunsen's portrayal is not unjust, and it is certainly a character with whom we have become familiar over the century of Freudian scholarship. It is just that this portrayal of Freud somewhat clouds our understanding of the historical Freud, and an appreciation of how his ideas work, then and now. Further danger of indulging too much in the romantic view of Freud is that it opens the door to exactly the sort of tyranny that Freud warns us to avoid, and which Edmunsen otherwise intelligently addresses: the overinvestment in the hero and the abandonment of ambivalence for the easy comforts of authority.

Edmunsen's conclusion is somewhat confused, mirroring too often I think Freud's naïve and vain belief in Enlightened 'civilisation' with Edmunsen's own naïve and vain belief in 'democracy', and I suppose that it is unfair to expect Edmunsen to provide a thorough consideration of the socio-economic bases for modern fundamentalism, but his conclusion offers narrow views of some more potently difficult and complex issues.

I would dearly have liked to have loved this book, but I do not because it does not sufficiently challenge my understanding of Freud, psychoanalysis, a certain historical moment or the modern world. However, as an introduction to Freud, Freudian theory and Freudian thinking on group behaviour, it is exceptional: clear, accessible and intriguing. This book about the death of Sigmund Freud will make Freud come alive, and provide a good launching

point to go and then read Fromm and Winnicott. Or, even better, to go and read more Freud.

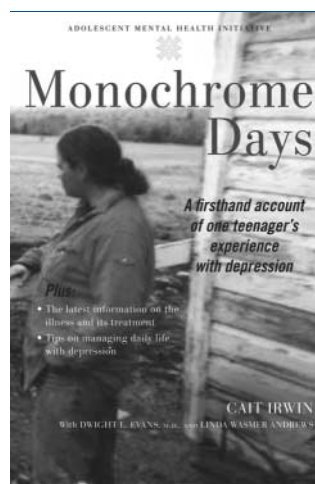
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Trouble in My Head: A Young Girl's Fight with Depression

By Mathilde Monaque.
Vermillion. 2007. 176pp. £7.99 (pb).
ISBN 9780091917239



Monochrome Days: A Firsthand Account of One Teenager's Experience with Depression

By Cait Irwin with Dwight L. Evans
& Linda Wasmer Andrews.
Oxford University Press. 2007.
184pp. £17.99 (hb).
ISBN 9780195310047

Autobiographical accounts of illnesses and disorders have enjoyed huge popularity in the past decade. There has been a glut of publications of every sort; on every conceivable condition, from the points of view by every conceivable person concerned with the disorder. There have been numerous reasons advanced for why a person would share in print, experiences that have caused them considerable distress. Cait Irwin in *Monochrome Days* candidly admits to using it as personal therapy whereas Mathilde Monaque is at some pains to stress her altruistic credentials in ensuring the redemption of her readers. The differences do not end there.

Irwin's tone is measured and her prose lucid. She does not need to take refuge in hyperbole or a sensationalistic need to 'shock' her audience into awareness and acceptance. Her account is reinforced throughout by sound evidence base from a psychiatrist done in a very naturalistic fashion within the text. The use of a journalist to investigate and report on male depression is intriguing but understated.

There are valuable pen pictures of the internal landscapes of depression as befits an artist and author. She describes a