

in the past 10 years there has been an increase in custodial sentences for young people by 90%.

This book explores various state responses to youth offending and child protection and the associated interfaces between policy and practice. A couple of chapters are dedicated to exploring different approaches to the youth justice and childcare protection interface, mainly addressing systems in Western Europe, the UK and the USA. The merits and drawbacks of integrated or separatist approaches are debated. Arguments passed include policies based on: welfare and punishment considerations; procedural rights; causation; the identification of young people and their families who are at risk; and intervention effects.

Also in the book, there is an in-depth exploration of the Children's Hearing System in Scotland, which effectively adopts an integrated approach to youth justice and child protection. It is proposed that creating parallel legal processes may have the capacity to increase criminalisation and undermine effectiveness unless part of a coherent system of youth justice and child protection. As the age of criminal responsibility differs in various countries, there may be some benefit in separating the adjudication of proof from the disposal decision, a process utilised in the Scottish Hearing System.

A key question the book poses is whether youth justice and effective interventions are best served by treating young people according to the grounds upon which they come to public attention or their individual needs.

It is proposed that a broader view of youth justice be taken, with a greater focus on restorative justice, mediation, family conferencing conflict resolution and problem solving.

An interesting chapter by David Archard on children rights and juvenile justice differentiates between participation and protection rights. He postulates that the shift to a criminal justice model for young people may be attributable to them being seen increasingly as agents, a change that can be explained by the increasing use of a participatory rights discourse.

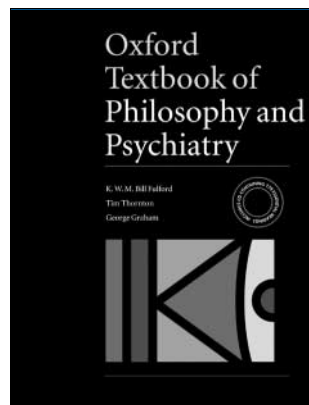
What emerges is that arrangements regarding youth justice and child protection, whether integrated or separatist, appear in large part to be a 'product of a series of *ad hoc* policies driven by political imperatives rather than having an overarching design'.

This book has certainly been thought-provoking for me as a mental health professional working with young people who are involved both with the youth justice and child protection systems in England and Wales. It has again aroused my concerns about the origins of youth policy in this area, the impact of political imperatives on this policy, the increasing criminalisation of young people, the low age of criminal responsibility within the UK and Ireland and the alarmingly increasing rate of custodial sentences imposed. Finally, it is of serious concern that despite the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (1995) formally reporting that the human rights of child prisoners in England and Wales are routinely violated, there has been little or no remedial action taken.

This book is a useful reference for all those working in criminal justice, child protection or the interface between both, including social workers, health professionals, lawyers and those involved in developing policy in this area. There is slight over-emphasis on the Scottish Hearing Systems, although the author did acknowledge that the book arose following a conference entitled 'The Scottish Children's Hearings at a Crossroads'. The book explores the rationale, impact and efficacy of current policies and processes employed in youth justice and child protection.

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Oxford Textbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry

By K. W. M. Bill Fulford, Tim Thornton & George Graham
Oxford University Press.
2006. 872pp. £59.95 (pb).
ISBN 0198526954

This is a landmark publication. Dealing with the major philosophical dilemmas as they relate to psychiatry, it provides a lucid and accessible introduction to a subject that can often seem forbidding and abstruse.

The book provides a philosophical overview of the different approaches to mental disturbance down the ages. The authors suggest that these approaches have veered between the twin poles of the 'medical' and the 'moral': between the belief that madness is the result of brain disease and the belief that it is a psychological or spiritual problem. This conflict was apparent at least 2000 years ago, when Hippocrates espoused a humoral theory of madness, in contrast to Plato, who believed that insanity signified a disturbance of the soul. The authors chart the winding path of this dispute through to the present day and the argument between biological psychiatrists and their opponents as to the nature of mental illness. A pivotal figure in this historical reading of events, and indeed in the book itself, is Karl Jaspers, whom the authors describe as 'psychiatry's first philosopher'. Jaspers sought to reconcile the medical endeavour to find causal explanations for psychiatric illness with the moral emphasis on its meaning for the individual sufferer. The authors concede that he did not succeed but argue that the failure lies less with Jaspers than with the extraordinary difficulty of the problems involved. Likewise, they feel that Freud has been unfairly scapegoated for his attempts to relate meaning to mechanism.

We are still wrestling with the same problems today. The authors maintain that rapid advances in the neurosciences have made such questions of pressing practical and philosophical importance. For example, have the developments in genetics and neuroimaging abolished such concepts as free will and consciousness? Are they illusory, mere epiphenomena of brain activity? Or are the neuroscientists themselves misguided, as contended by the 'new mysterians' – those who hold that the riddle of the mind/body relation cannot be unravelled? The authors prefer a middle course, eschewing both the triumphalism of the biological reductionists and what they call the 'premature retreat' of the mysterians.

As the book makes clear, psychiatry confronts many of the fundamental questions in philosophy, whether or not its practitioners acknowledge this or are even aware of it. In fact, the great strength of this volume is that it demonstrates how philosophical considerations impinge on practice. It does this by taking examples from seemingly ordinary clinical encounters and carefully unpacking the words and actions of the participants to reveal their underlying philosophical assumptions. In this the authors are guided by the work of J. L. Austin, the Oxford philosopher, who held that we should look at how words and ideas are actually employed in the everyday world rather than how they are defined in theory. Thus the authors are able to undermine the

notion that making a diagnosis is a neutral procedure. They point out that, even in the supposedly unproblematic world of the 'hard' sciences, such as physics, it is accepted that the observer influences what is observed. In the diagnostic interview, the values and preconceptions of the doctor shape the final assessment of the patient. The book also examines such topics as autism and how we can have knowledge of the minds of others. It looks at schizophrenia in the context of philosophical notions of personal identity, and it considers depression and the role of individual responsibility.

Throughout the volume, the authors are at pains to emphasise that they are not offering a grand unifying theory or a definitive answer to the human predicament. Instead they seek to highlight the unresolved questions in modern-day psychiatry in the hope that readers decide for themselves what should be done. The book is aimed at those who have no prior knowledge of philosophy and it takes them, in a series of steps, from the foothills of apparently mundane clinical conundrums to the very pinnacles of contemporary philosophical concerns. Along the way it provides extensive references to the relevant literature and also sketches of the major philosophers and debates that have informed Western philosophy over the preceding centuries.

The book is heavily influenced by Anglo-American analytic philosophy and gives much less space to Continental thinkers in the existential tradition, such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Sartre. This is disappointing, as their writings seem much livelier and passionate than the dry tomes of many analytic philosophers. Further, there is no reference to those writers, such as Dostoyevsky, Proust and Camus, who have a strong philosophical aspect to their work. But these are minor reservations. On the whole, this is a hugely ambitious and wide-ranging enterprise. The authors acknowledge that the last word on philosophy is unlikely ever to be written, because it is an evolving and dynamic discipline. However, this textbook is destined to become the standard work in its field for some time to come.

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Psychiatric Interviewing and Assessment

By Rob Poole & Robert Higgs.
Cambridge University Press.
2006. 238pp. £30.99(pb).
ISBN 9780521671194

This book needs to be considered as recommended reading for all doctors in training in psychiatry. It grasps many nettles and provides a rare insight into contemporary psychiatric practice.

Not only does this book provide a grounding in basic history-taking and mental state examination, but it also tackles the more challenging and enjoyable aspects of our work, such as community mental health team functioning, managing relationships, dealing with substance misuse, difficulties relating to psychosis, interactions with families, as well as wider issues of culture and beliefs. It provides illuminating and thought-provoking insights into self-awareness and the issues we as practitioners bring into the therapeutic relationship.

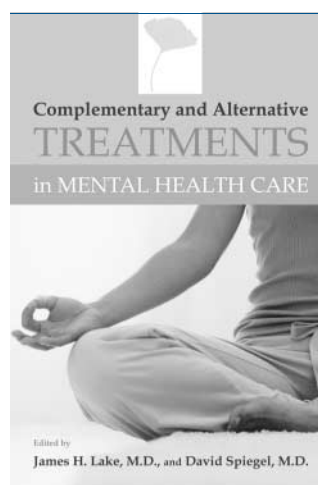
These issues are captured succinctly by well-chosen clinical scenarios. The text is easily digested and readable, with summary points at the end of each chapter which help to make what can be enormous issues distilled and clear.

A persistent theme is the depth of clinical experience evident in the authors, which is neither lofty nor manifest as unattainable ideals. This book is disarmingly applicable and approachable. What appears as deceptively simple, however, is only possible through considerable familiarity with the subject matter, which is consistently evident here.

This book brings together disparate elements of today's psychiatric practice and provides a real starting point for trainees. For this reason, it is an unsurpassed and important work.

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Complementary and Alternative Treatments in Mental Health Care

Edited by James H. Lake & David Spiegel.
American Psychiatric Publishing.
2007. 478pp. US\$56.00 (pb).
ISBN 1585622028

Complementary or alternative therapies are becoming increasingly popular with patients, yet doctors and other conventional healthcare practitioners may be slow to catch up with this trend. Lake & Spiegel have edited this fascinating book which tries to narrow the philosophical gap between the disease- and symptom-oriented Western medical approach and a holistic approach to mental health rooted mainly, but not exclusively, in Eastern tradition. The combination of an evidence-based approach with a philosophical and historical perspective conveys an argument for truly integrative mental healthcare that may even convince the toughest conventional and alternative hardliners. For instance, if homoeopathy and its resort to particle physics remains counter-intuitive and unacceptable to most scientific minds, it is important to remember that it was born from the observation that many then contemporary conventional treatments were not only ineffective but often unkind