

BOOK REVIEWS

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The basis for successful ageing

THIS was the last publication of its senior author, the late Richard S. Lazarus. Lazarus felt that the topic of emotional development in the elderly had been neglected in his earlier works.



Coping with Aging

RICHARD S. LAZARUS & BERNICE N. LAZARUS

OXFORD: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS; 2006; Hb £19.99
(ISBN 0 19 517302 3)

REVIEWED BY **Rebecca Stack**

Therefore, this book was focused on the management of the stress and distress associated with getting older. In the opinion of Richard Lazarus and his wife Bernice Lazarus, coping is the basis of successful ageing, and was a topic that needed to be addressed.

Those with interests in health psychology or in the fields of ageing, stress or emotion will naturally appreciate the content of a book written by one of the world's leading authorities on these topics. However, ageing is a universal truth, and for those of us anticipating the experience of old age, the content of this book would be both relevant and meaningful.

The authors emphasise that *Coping with Aging* is not a textbook but an attempt to address the nature of ageing in a personal way. However, a respectable amount of academic theory and research is examined within this humanistic framework. This book is not only academically forthcoming, it is able to give the reader opportunities for personal reflection.

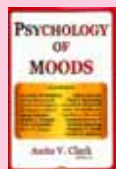
Contrary to my initial reaction to the title, I found the content of

this book to be far from melancholy. The authors have contrasted the negatives of getting older with the positives many individuals benefit from in their later years. Individual differences in the ageing

process are given special consideration (which is not an easy thing to do in a field that is so broad and researched). The use of case studies, carefully selected research and fascinating insights into the lives of these two renowned psychologists, helps the reader appreciate the personal aspects of the ageing process being relayed.

The ability to cope effectively is seen as the basis for successful ageing and the book pleasingly concludes with eight principles for doing so. These principles are drawn from the book's earlier discussions and provide the reader something to take away (I've certainly picked up a few tips).

■ *Rebecca Stack is at the University of Manchester.*



Psychology of Moods

ANITA V. CLARK (ED.)

NEW YORK: NOVA SCIENCE; 2005; Hb £63.99
(ISBN 1 59454 309 7)

REVIEWED BY **Ruth Hewston**

THIS edited collection aims to gather international research to discuss current debate in the psychology of mood. The reader is introduced well to the construct of mood and the chapters, in the most part, can be approached with a limited background in the field. It may be argued that a clearer underpinning and theoretical framework for the inclusion of chapters is needed, as some sections of the book do not always fully acknowledge the distinctions between the constructs of mood, emotion, and indeed affect.

Despite this weakness the authors should be praised for their comprehensive stand-alone chapters. I suspect that some readers may find the book disjointed and limited in cohesiveness. However, there are some good explanations of relevant debates and some excellent references to other research.

Overall this edited collection provides a useful contribution to the field and may be beneficial for a reader new to this line of enquiry.

■ *Dr Ruth Hewston is a Research Fellow at the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth, University of Warwick.*

To coach or not to coach – that is the question

Achieving Excellence in Your Coaching Practice: How to Run a Highly Successful Coaching Business

GLADEANA McMAHON, STEPHEN PALMER & CAROLINE WILDING
HOVE: ROUTLEDGE; 2006; Pb £14.99
(ISBN 1 58391896 5)

REVIEWED BY **John M. Fisher**

AS an internal coach, counsellor, consultant and trainer, I approached this book with some excitement – I'm always looking for ways to further help and inform my skill base. On completing the book I was still excited by it but for a different reason.

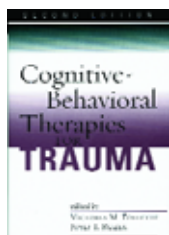
Does the book do what it says on the tin? The answer is no and yes. This book is not about 'achieving excellence in your counselling practice', rather it's about understanding how to set up and run your own business.

Whilst the book uses some coaching techniques (e.g. 'reflection points', case studies and action plans) to take you through all the elements (and pitfalls) you need to understand and consider when first going solo, most, if not all, the information could easily apply to setting up any business.

This book is an enjoyable, easy read and highly recommended for anyone thinking of going it alone.

■ *John M. Fisher is a personal development trainer with Xchanging HR Services.*





Facing the challenge

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies for Trauma

VICTORIA M. FOLLETTE & JOSEF I. RUZEK (EDS.)

NEW YORK: GUILFORD PRESS; 2006; Hb £34.50 (ISBN 1 59385 247 9)

REVIEWED BY Neil Roberts

THIS second edition is a substantially revised and updated version of a book first published in 1998. Contributors include leading international experts in the field. Cognitive behavioural therapies are arguably the best-established and most effective therapies for psychological difficulties arising from trauma, such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Treatment for PTSD is central to the book, although broader perspectives on psychological effects of trauma are emphasised.

The book is split in to three sections considering assessment issues, treatment interventions and chapters on specialised populations and treatment populations. I found the assessment section to be fairly technical in nature and would suggest that this section is most likely to be of interest to those with more advanced clinical experience and those involved in related research. The intervention and specialised population sections were generally clearly described, highly relevant clinically and thoroughly grounded in research. Topics covered include acute stress reactions, guilt and shame, sexual re-victimisation, traumatic grief, PTSD and substance misuse and therapeutic interventions for the effects of childhood trauma.

In clinical practice, therapeutic work

with trauma survivors is often found to be very challenging, especially with those with complex needs and presentation. Many of these challenges are extensively explored, most chapters are thoroughly grounded in the research literature, and flexibility based on individual case conceptualisation is often stressed.

My major disappointment with this book was that I felt that there was insufficient exploration of the work of British-based psychologists, such as Anke Ehlers, David Clark and Chris Brewin. These authors and their colleagues have made major contributions to the development of treatment interventions for PTSD sufferers over recent years and these, I felt were not adequately represented. I also felt that more reflection on issues of therapeutic process would have been helpful.

Nevertheless, this is probably the most comprehensive book on trauma therapy that I have come across so far. I would certainly want to recommend it to those involved in the trauma field and those wanting to become more familiar with this area of therapeutic work.

■ *Dr Neil Roberts is a consultant clinical psychologist with the Traumatic Stress Service, Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust.*

A different stroke story

Surviving a Stroke: Recovering and Adjusting to Living with Hypertension

MIKE RIPLEY

GREAT AMBROOK, DEVON: WHITE LADDER PRESS; 2006; Pb £7.99 (ISBN 0 95482198 X)

REVIEWED BY Shirley Thomas

IHAVE read many textbooks and journal articles about stroke, but Mike Ripley's moving story about his recovery from a stroke at the age of 50 provides a perspective that traditional textbooks cannot offer. Written in a lively and often humour-filled style, this book is an autobiographical account that gives insight into the experience of having a stroke and living with the aftermath.

The reader is taken on a journey from the immediate days after the stroke waiting for answers, to trying to sleep amidst an orchestra of snoring on the hospital ward, to the quest to find a blood pressure drug with the least unpleasant side-effects.

The information panels interspersed throughout the book provide easy-to-follow definitions of medical jargon that can otherwise be baffling to those unfamiliar

A 20TH-CENTURY ROMP

Key Thinkers in Psychology

ROM HARRÉ

LONDON: SAGE; 2006; Pb £19.99

(ISBN 1 4129 0345 9)

REVIEWED BY Fiona Kennedy

THIS excellent book is a romp through the psychologists and others who have made major contributions to our science during the 20th century.

Other reviewers have used terms such as 'un-put-downable', I use 'romp' because it really is fun to read. On the other hand, erudition is apparent on every page.

Harré takes each chosen thinker and gives a brief biography and summary of their work followed by a critical 'What did he contribute?' section (sadly, no women here). Links flow between observations about the thinker's personality and work and the philosophical underpinnings of the theories and models.

It is aimed at undergraduates and others studying the history of psychology, whom it will surely delight. As a clinical psychologist, I found it grounded my knowledge of the clinical field back into the discipline as a whole. For example, the philosophical paradigms of positivism and realism and their connections to behaviourism and cognitivism lead to all kinds of thoughts: What does it mean to be a 'scientist-practitioner'? How do we need to think about investigating the effectiveness of what we do? Just a shame Rom wasn't in the room to discuss it at the time!

For anyone who has spent years rowing off into convoluted estuaries, and would like an entertaining and useful chart to remind them of River Psychology as a whole, I thoroughly recommend this book.

■ *Dr Fiona Kennedy is with the Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Service at St Mary's Hospital, Newport.*

with these terms.

This book was published about three years after Mike Ripley had his stroke, and once I got to the end of the book I was left wondering how his journey continues.

■ *Dr Shirley Thomas is with the University of Nottingham.*

Creativity and the brain

IN *Neuropsychology of Art*, Dahlia W. Zaidel examines issues such as where creativity comes from, how we represent the world, and the ways these internal representations breakdown in the context of brain pathology. She explores how works of art by artists with brain damage can help us understand the origins of our creative abilities and experiences of these internal representations, and in so doing offers some important insights.

Firstly, from the compilation of single cases of established visual artists, autistic savants with special artistic skills, composers and trained musicians, a distinct recurrent type of artistic composition post-damage has not emerged, either across or within different brain pathologies. This absence suggests preservation of artistic capabilities despite onslaught of neuronal damage (following stroke or dementia, or with



Neuropsychology of Art: Neurological, Cognitive and Evolutionary Perspectives

DAHLIA W. ZAIDEL

HOVE: PSYCHOLOGY PRESS; 2005;
Pb £49.95 (ISBN 1841693634)

REVIEWED BY N.M.J. Edelstyn

autism). Secondly, artists are also as susceptible to visuo-spatial deficits as are other individuals, but because of their preserved artistic skill, their work can appear visually eloquent in incorporating deficits like neglect into their visual art. Thirdly, regardless of laterality or lesion location, the artists showed an adherence to their premorbid artistic style, although a more variable effect was noted for technique. Fourthly, artistic skills that include creativity and aesthetic preference remain relatively intact, modified, enhanced, or even generated in individuals who, premorbidly, had not displayed overt artistic

tendencies. This point has most recently been illustrated in the report of 51-year-old Tommy McHugh (Lythgoe *et al.*, 2005), a former builder, who, following a localised brain haemorrhage, developed an artistic compulsion and now writes poetry, draws, paints and makes sculptures.

Throughout this book, Zaidel has carefully distinguished between talent or skill and creativity. Having artistic skill alone does not guarantee creativity. Talent is something she attributes to genetic inheritance, if only by pointing out that autistic savants display skills from a very early age, before most of us, or non-savant

autistic persons, do.

The diverse material and clarity of writing makes *Neuropsychology of Art* of interest to all scientists and scholars as well as a useful and fascinating source on important current developments in the field of brain and art.

The publisher's website provides additional colour figures at www.psypress.co.uk/zaidel and the book's chapter subheadings can be viewed at dahliaz.bol.ucla.edu/newbook.html. It should also be mentioned that there is a detailed subject index with artists' names as well as a useful glossary.

■ *Dr Edelstyn is a senior lecturer at Keele University.*

Reference

Lythgoe, M.F.X., Pollak, T.A., Kalmus, M., de Haan, M. & Chong, W.K. (2005). Obsessive, prolific artistic output following subarachnoid haemorrhage. *Neurology* 64, 397–398.

More than just Piaget's opponent

STUDENTS are often first introduced to Vygotsky as 'Piaget's opponent'. Indeed, for some, the predominance of Piaget's theory means that little is learnt about Vygotsky beyond his ideas of scaffolding and the zone of proximal development. This book aims to rectify this by bringing the ideas of the neo-Vygotskian approach to English speakers.

It starts with a comprehensive introduction to Vygotsky's theory, which, Dr Karpov argues repeatedly, is misunderstood by many. This is followed by a description of the neo-Vygotskian approach to child development with chapters broken down into stages of child development. Empirical research is interwoven through the commentary as are translations of Vygotsky's work. This, in itself, makes this book a fascinating read as it provides a source of research rarely accessible to English speakers due to

The Neo-Vygotskian Approach to Child Development

Y.V. KARPOV

NEW YORK: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS; 2005;
Hb £45.00 (ISBN 0 521 83012 5)

REVIEWED BY Fiona Ulph

language barriers. The book is written in a logical manner with chapters mirroring developmental stages of the child.

Despite this, the style of the book is quite excluding. The pace of the introduction of new concepts and the lack of structuring typical of textbooks means that this is not an easy-reading book and it is unlikely to be suitable for undergraduate students or the general reader of psychology. Indeed, some of the sections of the book necessitate an amount of note taking or rereading to grasp the arguments the author is making. This is usually confined to sections that are highly

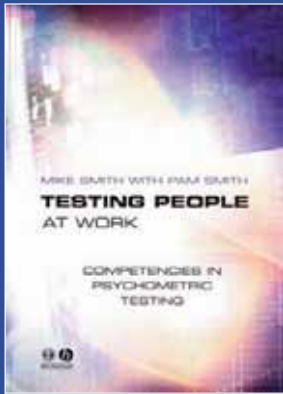
theoretical; in other sections of the book the writing

style flows much more easily. For researchers in this field, however, reading this book is definitely worth the effort as it is almost impossible to read it without becoming engaged in the arguments. The author is clearly a specialist in this field and it is a privilege to read his explanation of Vygotsky's theory and the neo-Vygotskian approach.

■ *Fiona Ulph is at the University of Nottingham.*



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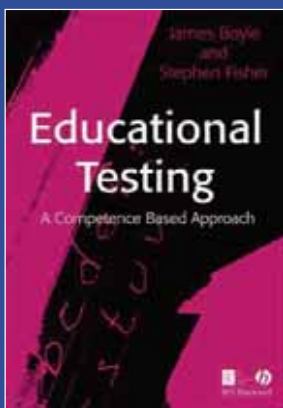


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