

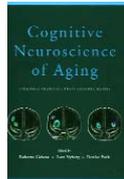
## BOOK REVIEWS

If you would like to review a book for *The Psychologist*, contact Mike Thompson on [mictho@bps.org.uk](mailto:mictho@bps.org.uk). Publishers should send advance title information and books for possible review to *The Psychologist* at the Leicester address.

# Dealing with an age-old issue

**T**HERE is an assumption, quite a reasonable one, that cognitive ageing is largely a result of cerebral ageing – but is it? In an attempt to address this assumption this book tackles the Herculean task of bringing together two distinct disciplines: age-related changes in the brain and age-related changes in cognition.

Basically, the cognitive psychology of ageing has looked at the effects of ageing on behavioural measures of cognition – for example deficits in memory and attention. By contrast, studies in the neuroscience of ageing have looked at the effects of aging on the anatomy and physiology of the brain, expressed in terms of cerebral atrophy and synaptic loss, using neuronal measures such



## *Cognitive Neuroscience of Aging: Linking Cognitive and Cerebral Aging*

ROBERTO CABEZA, LARS NYBERG & DENISE PARK (Eds)

OXFORD: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS; 2005; Hb £42.00 (ISBN 0 19 515674 9)

REVIEWED BY **Lesley Atchison**

as post-mortem and *in vivo* imaging. Grandly, this book claims to have created a new discipline from these two distinct ones – the cognitive neuroscience of ageing (CNA). Modestly, it reassures the reader that it can do no more than provide an introduction to this new field – and that there's a lot more to come, especially on the neural side of things.

The book is divided into four main

sections. The first looks at the principal imaging methods used, including structural, resting functional and activation imaging. The next is about basic cognitive processes, including memory, attention and perception. The third focuses on clinical and applied issues, such as the combination of imaging and cognitive rehabilitation methods. The final section looks at models in CNA.

This is an ambitious undertaking, a book with a sombre black cover, chapters dense in information, but actually it works – provided you are already working in one of the areas. It is not for newcomers. It draws together a wealth of research in each chapter, and provides a useful summary at the end, some thought-provoking questions and an admission, quite worrying, that we are a very long way from answering some of these questions. For those thirsting for more there are many references at the end of each of the 15 chapters – in total a book with almost 1500 references.

As both a clinician and someone who will probably be old one day, I was drawn by an interesting section on modifiers of brain ageing. It seems that hypertension and other cardiovascular risk factors, including diabetes, act as accelerators of age-related decline. However, it seems that aerobic fitness can slow age-related deterioration and is especially good for executive functions.

By drawing together two distinct, but related, disciplines this book generates a number of questions which should inspire academics and research-hungry clinicians. Since the majority of us will grow old one day, and we will be a big majority, there will be huge implications for care, treatment, quality of life and lifestyle. Not before time, I would say to this 'introduction' to cognitive and cerebral ageing.

■ *Dr Lesley Atchison is a clinical neuropsychologist with Sheffield Care Trust.*

## Putting emotion in context

### *Emotion in Social Relations*

BRIAN PARKINSON, AGNETA H. FISCHER & ANTONY S.R. MANSTEAD

HOVE: PSYCHOLOGY PRESS; 2005; Pb £19.99 (ISBN 1 84169 046 5)

REVIEWED BY **Abigail Locke**

**A**T last a book that explicitly tackles the social nature of emotion. In this ambitious text, Parkinson, Fischer and Manstead set out to explore how emotions work across three social levels – cultural, intergroup and interpersonal. They first consider how the social nature of emotion has been traditionally viewed in emotion theories and examine how emotional experience may vary across cultures, in particular looking at the ways in which culture dictates the display rules tied to emotional experience. From here, the authors move the argument on to how emotional experience relates to groups and group identities. They consider how emotions are linked to prejudice and conflicts between different groups of people. Finally, they consider facial expressions and interpersonal emotions, before bringing together the main arguments of the book.

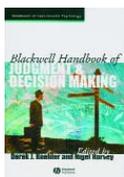
The authors claim that social context, often neglected in previous research, must be considered when studying emotion. In addition they claim that culture (and its

constraints) has a strong impact on individual emotional experience. However, they argue that this impact is not absolute. They claim that we need to devote some attention to how emotion operates at interpersonal and intergroup levels, and consider how culture may both influence and be influenced by these.

The book offers a comprehensive overview of the emotion literature and includes many of the key perspectives. If the book has a shortcoming, I would suggest that it is light in its treatment of certain social constructionist approaches to emotion and their implications for emotion theories. Such approaches are inherently social and should perhaps have a stronger representation in this text. These concerns aside, this is a strong book that I would recommend to advanced undergraduates, postgraduates and academics with an interest in emotion.

■ *Dr Abigail Locke is in the Department of Human Sciences at Loughborough University.*

# How do you decide what you decide?



## *Blackwell Handbook of Judgment and Decision Making*

DEREK J. KOEHLER & NIGEL HARVEY (Eds)

OXFORD: BLACKWELL; 2004; Hb £85.00 (ISBN 1 4051 0746 4)

REVIEWED BY **Khadj Rouf**

**T**HIS book is an international collaboration between experts in the field of judgement and decision making (JDM). Its audience will be researchers and advanced psychology students, though I approached it from a cognitive therapist's perspective.

At 30 chapters and more than 600 pages, this multi-authored book is certainly a meaty read. It is comprehensively researched and referenced. Divided into four sections, there is an overview of theoretical models, detailed chapters on aspects of decisions, judgements and real-world applications.

The book explores what drives JDM, given our tendencies to make systematic errors. It explores concepts of goal maximisation, loss aversion, and social and cultural influences. It also looks (though in

less detail) at individual belief systems. It examines how we use fast, inductive-based problem solving in our lives. Unsurprisingly, such instinct-based reasoning can lead to biased thinking, and the book questions why this happens (e.g. research effects, poor probabilistic thinking, tendencies not to use explicit logic). However, the book also notes that intuitive strategies are robust too – if they weren't, we'd have abandoned them.

Instinctive reasoning has face validity – we can have a hard time estimating risk and uncertainty so heuristics help. Some authors look at how we can sharpen up our instinctive decisions by developing assessment skills, mental maps of problems and entertaining multiple scenarios of problems. A good use of timely feedback can improve our decisions. Other chapters examining how we can 'debias' our heuristics and the impact of affect on decision making were thought-provoking.

Overall, I found this a very technical, dense book that requires a good knowledge of statistics and mathematical models, but it will undoubtedly be a useful handbook for those pursuing JDM as a specialism. As a multi-voiced book, it would have benefited from both an introduction outlining key concepts in JDM and a detailed developmental overview of the field. It misses an opportunity to interface with clinical psychology, its main focus of application being in the fields of finance, policy and medical decision making. Some chapters are very academic and require some deciphering. However, there are others which are written in a lively, readable style and provided useful insights into how we decide what we decide.

■ *Khadj Rouf is a clinical psychologist, working in the West Oxfordshire Community Mental Health Team.*

## *The Seven Steps of Spiritual Intelligence: The Practical Pursuit of Purpose, Success and Happiness*

RICHARD A. BOWELL

LONDON: NICHOLAS BREALEY; 2004; Pb £12.99 (ISBN 1 85788 344 6)

REVIEWED BY **Helen Rodwell**

CHALLENGING and hard work are the words that best sum up how I feel about this book. I have previously read and understood numerous books on spiritual development so I felt somewhat irritated to be reading text that overly complicated the process. What I did like about this book was the interweaving of research findings from neuroscience and the numerous historical stories, such as the story of Gandhi's spiritual awakening after contemplating poverty and oppression whilst visiting South Africa.

■ *Dr Helen Rodwell is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist at Dunstable Family Consultation Clinic.*

## The latest for SPSS users

### *Quantitative Data Analysis with SPSS 12 and 13: A Guide for Social Scientists*

ADAM BRYMAN & DUNCAN CRAMER

LONDON: ROUTLEDGE; 2005; Pb £17.50 (ISBN 0 415 34080 2)

REVIEWED BY **Stanley Richardson**

**T**HIS is not 'Data Analysis for Dummies' or an introduction to statistics. It is the latest edition of the authors' textbook and describes the use of the most recent version of SPSS. And as the authors say, Release 13 is very similar to Releases 12, 11 and 10, so the book can also be used for these earlier versions.

After discussion of causality, research design and survey data, the book concentrates on analysing data with computers. It deals with gaining access to SPSS, assuming almost no previous knowledge. Throughout the book are useful 'screenshots' with appropriate explanations. Each chapter contains interesting exercises, with answers.

Dimensions of concepts, types of variables, validity and reliability receive lively treatment without assuming much statistical knowledge. The treatment of Cronbach's alpha and the chi-square test are two examples of the book's clear explanations without getting bogged down in the intricacies of the formulae involved.

Bivariate and multivariate analysis are dealt with in four chapters. Analysis of variance, rightly, receives detailed treatment. So do parametric tests. A more in-depth examination of non-parametric tests would have been useful. The concept of job satisfaction is used to discuss factor analysis – often a stumbling block for students.

The book should be useful to students everywhere, though its value would be enhanced by a glossary of terms. I recommend it for a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate students especially those studying psychology or management.

■ *Associate Professor Stanley Richardson is at Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Selangor, Malaysia. He also heads Stanley Richardson Management Consultants, Singapore.*

# Overcoming depression

**W**ITH an estimated 5–12 per cent of men and 10–25 per cent of women suffering from depression in their lifetime, Dr Shreeve's thorough and easy-to-read book is a timely and helpful resource. Drawing on her own personal experience of depression, and her professional experience of treating people who have depression, Shreeve provides a broad overview, while managing to maintain an informal, hopeful and jargon-free tone. Shreeve begins by defining what depression is and what it is not, and progresses logically by discussing possible internal and external triggers for depression. She explains the similarities and differences between various subtypes of depression, and then examines



## *Dealing With Depression: Practical Steps to Understanding and Overcoming It*

CAROLINE SHREEVE

LONDON: PIATKUS BOOKS; 2005; Pb £9.99 (ISBN: 0 7499 2496 9)

REVIEWED BY **Hannah Buckley**

prospective treatments, such as various types of antidepressants, psychodynamic therapy, CBT, counselling, homeopathy and hydrotherapy. The book is interspersed with case studies from her own experience of treating people with depression, and these first-person narrative accounts help to illustrate the realities of being depressed and trying to overcome depression.

Shreeve adopts a balanced tone throughout the book, and addresses the pros and cons of the various treatment options. With regard to the sometimes controversial topic of antidepressant medications, Shreeve acknowledges that she is in favour of their use, but concedes that certain medications can sometimes result in negative side-effects. While some clinicians might balk at her inclusion of newer treatments such as homeopathy or herbal remedies, Shreeve emphasises that

this book is for reference, and that the remedies described therein should not be used as a substitute for seeking professional help.

To summarise, this book is a comprehensive and useful first port of call for those interested in gaining a thorough overview of the area of depression. It aims to provide 'practical steps to understanding and overcoming it', and achieves this aim. I would recommend it not only for all working in the area of mental health, but also for people who have been diagnosed with depression, and their family and friends. I would love to read a similar style of book addressing another pertinent issue in mental health, such as psychosis.

■ *Hannah Buckley is with Lucena Clinic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.*

### *Statistics Explained (2nd edition)*

PERRY R. HINTON

HOVE: ROUTLEDGE; 2004; Pb £14.95 (ISBN 0 415 33285 0)

REVIEWED BY **Gillian Smith**

**THIS** is certainly a book undergraduates could use for their own research projects; its examples are relevant and applicable, and its tone gets through the reasoning without getting too bogged down in statistical terminology. One of its (few) faults, however, is the use of complex statistical equations when students nowadays are using SPSS or other packages to generate their statistics.

Overall, this is a lively, relevant look at what its audience might consider a difficult subject matter and is certainly worth considering as a library or course text. Statistics explained? Perhaps so.

■ *Gillian Smith is an MPhil student at the University of Ulster.*

### *Psychotherapy as Positive Psychology*

PETRUSKA CLARKSON

LONDON: WHURR; 2005; Pb £25.00 (ISBN 1 86156 342 6)

REVIEWED BY **Dagmar Fabry**

**PETRUSKA** Clarkson has managed to bring in almost everything a good book on positive psychology should include. And though the book contains more already published articles than new material, it brings them together in a unique way to form a new gestalt! You may not agree with everything you read, but this is certainly stimulating food for thought.

■ *Dr Dagmar Fabry is with the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Newcastle University.*

### *Brain Injury and Returning to Employment: A Guide for Practitioners*

JAMES JAPP

LONDON: JESSICA KINGSLEY PUBLISHERS; 2005; Pb £15.95 (ISBN 1 84310 292 7)

REVIEWED BY **Gavin Newby**

**J**AMES Japp is a rarity. He is an occupational psychologist specialising in clinical neuropsychology and has produced an unashamedly non-academic text about returning to work after acquired brain injury (ABI). Avoiding all but a few references, Japp has produced a well-written introduction to this area. According to the foreword the book is written for non-specialist practitioners. It is unlikely, therefore, to appeal to experienced clinical neuropsychologists and is more suited as an introductory text for trainees, HR professionals, occupational therapists and Jobcentre Plus staff. The book may also be helpful for some higher-functioning clients.

Different chapters give comprehensive reviews of ABI and its consequences, vocational assessment and rehabilitation, and occupational psychology techniques. There is a helpful glossary. The case studies are useful but slightly over-simplistic and do not show vocational rehabilitation strategies in action.

Overall, this is a good read and introduction to vocational rehabilitation.

■ *Dr Gavin Newby is the Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist with the South Cheshire Acquired Brain Injury Service in Chester.*

