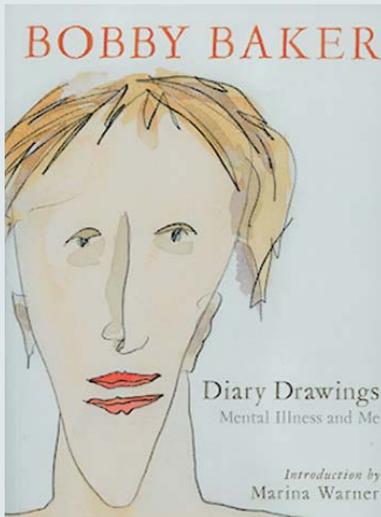


A profoundly moving emotional journey

Diaries are immensely personal. They give some insight into the reflections on the inner thoughts, feelings and experiences of an individual at a given time point. This diary collection is no exception. However, this diary collection is exceptional. Given the personal nature both of the images contained within this collection and of the words used to describe and reflect on these images, I feel it is only fair to give a personal reflection on this work.



Diary Drawings: Mental Illness and Me
Bobby Baker

This work is the book version of an exhibition displayed by the Wellcome Collection in London last year. The diary entries are drawings, by the artist Bobby Baker. The journey that Bobby Baker documents is that of the lived experience of 'mental illness' over 10 years. The documentation of this journey demonstrates the remarkable power of art to depict the human experience. It will no doubt be a disservice to this book to attempt to explain in words the experience of viewing this book.

I have very little experience of mental illness. My professional life is not in this area. I have little knowledge of mental illness beyond reading a few academic papers, seeing conference presentations, portrayals in the media and some discussions with academic colleagues who work in this area. I have not had mental illness touch my life.

This book touched me more than any of these previous experiences, and more than I expected. I first opened the book in my office, with the intention of writing a review. At the start I couldn't look at many of the images for long. Many are distressing insights into the inner world of Bobby Baker; the inner world of someone struggling. A world that at times you feel an unwelcome visitor to; an uninvited voyeur into someone else's distress. In many ways I am thankful I could read this privately rather than experience it collectively in a gallery. Viewing and reading

the book was a profoundly moving experience, and I am not sure how I would have dealt with my feelings in company.

I will not attempt to describe the drawings, suffice to say they cover emotions for which we have words (pain, loss, fear, hope, happiness, humour) as well as those that are difficult to describe in simple emotion terminology. The images depict the lived emotional experience but also embody the reflective emotional state of the artist – the self as observer of the self. This is often one of dark humour with which Bobby Baker expresses (or copes) with her inner experience, but equally often one of anguish.

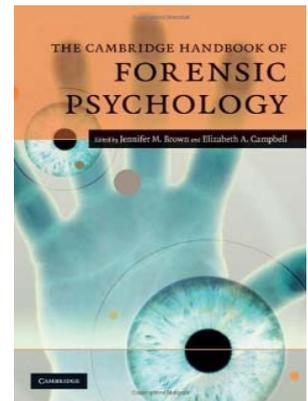
One key aspect to this collection of works is that each picture (first drawn daily then weekly) has no idea of the future, of what direction the journey will take, and as such they provide a powerful insight into the daily lived experience.

The work is divided into the stages of the journey through the therapeutic process. It is also embraced either end by insightful and eloquent reflections from writer Marina Warner at the beginning, and Bobby Baker herself and her daughter Dora Whittuck (now a clinical psychologist) at the end. It is in these reflections that the images are also given other narrative voices and views.

As someone who may be, in Jungian terms, described as having a preference for focusing on the outer world rather than the inner world, this book has privileged me with some insight into the complex 'reality' of living with mental illness as well as the difficult inter-relationship between 'professional' and 'client' in the therapeutic alliance.

| Profile Books; 2010; Pb £15.00

Reviewed by Paul Redford who is a lecturer at the University of the West of England, Bristol



Extremely useful

The Cambridge Handbook of Forensic Psychology
Jennifer M. Brown & Elizabeth A. Campbell (Eds.)

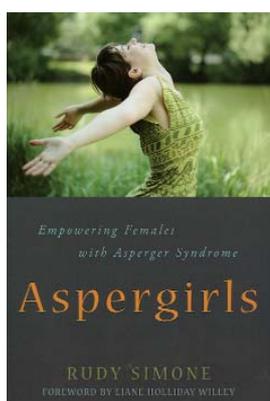
Multi-topic books that try to appeal to a wide audience often disappoint; this is an exception. Each chapter is well researched and presented in sufficient depth to interest the specialist as well as to provide a thorough introduction for readers new to the topic. All of the key areas in this diverse field are brought together, and Brown and Campbell have assembled an impressive cast list of experts: Harris and Rice on risk and dangerousness, Vetere on systemic interventions.

The book is helpfully organised into eight parts covering theories, assessment, treatment, criminal and civil law, special topics, professional and research practice. It is refreshing to find such a comprehensive forensic psychology book that is not aimed at the North American audience; important differences in approach, legislation and terminology make this British book more appealing.

In the fast-moving world of forensic psychology some coverage is inevitably already obsolete (e.g. the now defunct dangerous and severe personality disorder programme). But overall this book is an extremely useful resource and well worth buying.

| Cambridge University Press; 2010; Pb £45.00

Reviewed by Emma Williams who is Consultant Clinical and Forensic Psychologist, Broadmoor Hospital, Berkshire



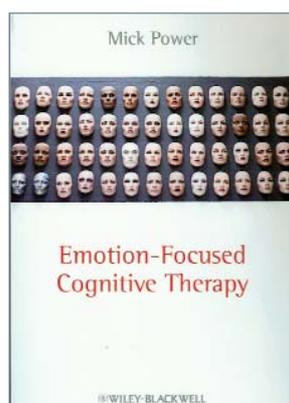
US women with AS

Aspergirls: Empowering Females with Asperger Syndrome
Rudy Simone

Rudy Simone has Asperger's syndrome (AS) and has written one other book in this area. In this book Rudy combines information and advice about AS with her own experiences, and with interviews she has carried out with other AS women (age range 20–60).

Though the book contains some useful management advice, and contains some helpful insights, it is rooted very much in American culture and presents a reality that is quite different for people in Great Britain, particularly with reference to medication. I felt that many of the issues described were familiar to women in general, not simply to women with AS (a useful list of AS traits in women is included at the back of the book). I felt misled by the title 'Aspergirls', as the majority of the book concerns *Asperwomen*. Despite this I have found some insights seeping into my clinical work, and literature in this area is limited, so I think those with an interest should read this book, but I would not recommend it for those with little existing knowledge of AS.

! Jessica Kingsley Publishers; 2010; Pb £12.99
Reviewed by Joanne Porter who is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist (Child Health)



Importance of emotion

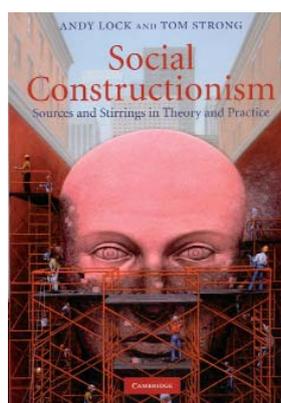
Emotion-focused Cognitive Therapy
Mick Power

This compelling book presents a convincing proposal for placing emotion at the core of therapeutic work within the cognitive behavioural paradigm. After reading this text, I find it extraordinary that emotion has had little place in the cognitive behavioural treatment of emotional disorders.

The author argues that it is time for a new approach in psychotherapy based on emotion. He draws on the latest information about emotion to develop an original approach to the treatment of clients with emotional disorders. He draws on the strengths of evidence-based cognitive behavioural and interpersonal approaches to psychotherapy and integrates appropriate work on emotion, cognition and behaviour to provide practitioners with a new understanding of therapy. Throughout he uses informative clinical examples.

This is a well-written, clearly structured and accessible text for students, clinical researchers and practitioners looking for an overview and up-to-date resource on emotion and its importance within the cognitive behavioural treatment of emotional disorders. It is also a useful guide for professionals seeking to enhance their clinical effectiveness.

! Wiley-Blackwell; 2010; Pb £27.99
Melanie Whyman who is a Research Associate at the University of Nottingham



Much to explore

Social Constructionism: Sources and Stirrings in Theory and Practice
Andy Lock & Tom Strong

This impressive book by Andy Lock and Tom Strong, professors of psychology in New Zealand and Canada respectively, is essentially a history of the philosophical ideas underpinning contemporary social constructionism.

Both authors cite Michael White, the founder of narrative therapy, as a fundamentally transformative influence on their work, and many of the thinkers who appear here (such as Foucault, Bruner, Vygotsky and Bateson) will be familiar to readers with an interest in narrative practice. This text though goes way beyond these usual suspects, however, including contemporary big names in the field such as Gergen, Shotter and Harré, as well as historical heavyweights such as Marx, Wittgenstein and Vico, to name but a few.

Most chapters share a similar format: presenting a brief biography of the theorist concerned, summarising their ideas and drawing links with contemporary social

constructionism, often ending with some reflections on the application of these ideas for the therapist. While the ideas are sometimes hard-going, the authors strike a balance between scholarly rigour and an engaging and personable style. The emphasis is significantly more on theory than practice, and as a practitioner I was left wanting more – particularly of the excellent last chapter.

For me, Lock and Strong's charting of the history of this 'counter-tradition' to mainstream psychological ideas has satisfyingly challenged an assumption I held that social constructionism is a recent phenomenon – while the term social constructionism dates perhaps to the 1970s, the critiques that inform it date back over 300 years. There is much to explore here, and it is a book I know I will keep returning to. For psychologists wishing to expand their grasp of the breadth and the implications of social constructionist ideas I highly recommend it.

! Cambridge University Press; 2010; Pb £25.99
Reviewed by Robert Whittaker who is a Senior Clinical Health Psychologist at St James Hospital, Leeds

just in

Sample titles just in:
The New Psychology of Leadership S. Alexander Haslam et al.
The Myth of Autism Sami Tamimi, Neil Gardner & Brian McCabe
Insidious Workplace Behavior Jerald Greenberg

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