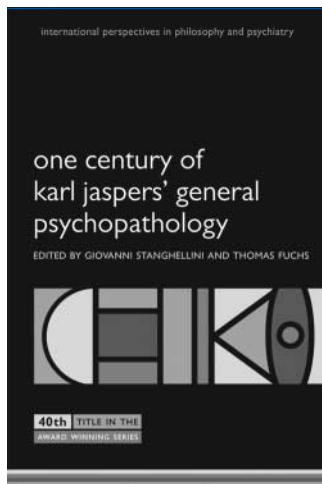


Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode
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One Century of Karl Jaspers' General Psychopathology

Edited by Giovanni Stanghellini
& Thomas Fuchs.
Oxford University Press. 2013.
£44.99 (pb). 344 pp.
ISBN: 9780199609253

This book celebrates 100 years of Jaspers' *General Psychopathology*. It is rich in ideas and demonstrates that Jaspers' book is still relevant to contemporary psychiatry. But, perhaps even more significantly, it proves that Jaspers' text is a vast, potentially inexhaustible reservoir of ideas that bears re-reading and allows for continuing criticism. And, that the concepts therein are serviceable, readily adaptable and stimulating of further thought.

The editors set out in the introduction what psychopathology is not, emphasising that it is not mental pathology, not nosology, not nosography and definitely not a specialty within psychiatry. By their account, psychopathology has at least three roles in psychiatry, namely development of a common language, provision of the basic ground for diagnosis and classification, and making an indispensable contribution to the intelligibility of abnormal experience based on subjective meanings. They identify three types of psychopathology: descriptive, clinical and structural.

In the section on historical and cultural background, Federico Leoni's chapter 'Jaspers in his time' traces the contributions of Goethe, Kraepelin, Dilthey, Kant, Husserl, Weber and Nietzsche to Jaspers' thinking. This sets the scene for the rest of the book as it provides an understanding of the foundation and sources of the ideas that pervade Jaspers' *General Psychopathology*. In the same section, Christophe Mundt's chapter, the 'Impact of Karl Jaspers' *General Psychopathology*', makes the point that Jaspers is even more relevant today, particularly in the light of the failures of current approaches to nosology and because of his focus on methodology and the problems of accessing inner subjective experience for investigation.

Chris Walker's chapter on 'Form and content in Jaspers' psychopathology' is an especial delight. There is clarity in his exposition of the nature of form and content as derived from Kant and its use in Jaspers' phenomenology. Walker uses Jaspers' notions of true hallucination and pseudo-hallucination as a means to examine this distinction between form and content. This account is also exemplary in its investigation of Kandinsky's contributions to Jaspers' thinking about pseudo-hallucination. In the same section, Matthew Broome explores 'Jaspers and neuroscience'. Less is generally known about Jaspers' writings on reasoning or causation in psychiatry. Broome examines this aspect of Jaspers' work and concludes that despite his view that Mind is

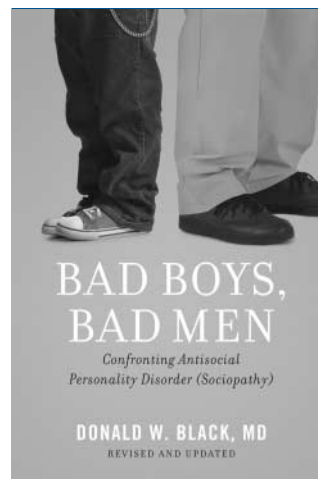
incomprehensible to scientific laws, Jaspers does not espouse an anti-science posture and in his life was not against neuroscientific research. What is clear, though, is that Jaspers held the view that Man has a transcendental nature and as such is ultimately free and, by definition, the totality of Man cannot be captured by scientific investigation.

Finally, Josef Parnas' chapter 'On psychosis: Karl Jaspers and beyond' deals with the nature of psychosis, its definitions and markers. Parnas' account puts centre stage 'radical irrationality' and 'radical displacement from intersubjectivity' as emblems of psychosis. Parnas makes the point that psychopathology cannot be simplified and requires careful attention to the structure of subjective experience.

The editors have pulled together some of the leading figures in psychopathology for this important book on the legacy of Karl Jaspers. Like Jaspers' own text, this book is rich in ideas, original and fresh in its exposition of novel thinking, and most significantly, clinically relevant.

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Bad Boys, Bad Men: Confronting Antisocial Personality Disorder (Sociopathy)

Donald W. Black.
Oxford University Press USA. 2013.
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ISBN: 9780199862030

There is a widespread sentiment that society has lost its moral compass and that there needs to be reclamation of traditional values. High-profile, violent crimes committed by adults or adolescents attract media attention. The consequent public furore often fuels political imperatives about being 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime'. Donald Black argues that these crimes may not be a result of erosion of moral societal values, but could be attributed to the actions of a group of individuals who have antisocial personality disorder.

This is a new edition but it builds on earlier research, with its stated goal being to 'educate the lay reader, mental health professionals, patients and families'. Donald Black draws on his own clinical experience, expertise and research, culminating in a book that should have wide-ranging appeal. He draws on examples from literature and film but also emphasises that those with antisocial personality disorder occupy our families, workplaces and neighbourhoods. He explores the impacts of culture and society on perception of what is deemed antisocial. Evolving psychiatric and historical perspectives explored include those of Pinel, Rush, Pritchard, Cleckley, Robbins and Hare.

Black describes the developmental trajectory of antisocial behaviour, specifically focusing on aspects of conduct disorder and its likely persistence into adulthood. Approaches to diagnosis are outlined, with Black providing a list of questions to aid assessment, adding a caveat that 'the reader should resist the temptation to diagnose themselves'. The multi-factional aetiology of antisocial personality disorder is explored in a comprehensive, well-researched and balanced way. He describes the natural history of the disorder and the divergent pathways that are possible, and draws usefully on the work of Robbins and Moffitt. Treatment options are outlined, with particular attention being paid to the treatment of comorbidity. Black takes a practical approach to the challenges of psychological treatment in terms of both efficacy and the impact on patient and therapist alike. The book concludes with advice for families and those suffering from the disorder.

As a child psychiatrist, I found the relatively limited exploration of developmental continuity disappointing and outwith what I was expecting, given the title. In conclusion, this is a book that makes the concept of antisocial personality disorder accessible to the lay person and is useful reading for professionals and trainees within health and criminal justice systems. It is relatively jargon free and accessible to a broad readership, and the concept is brought to life through case studies, including those of high-profile offenders.

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