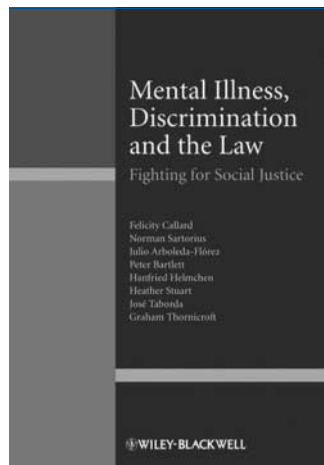


## Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode  
and Rosalind Ramsay



### Mental Illness, Discrimination and the Law: Fighting for Social Justice

By Felicity Callard,  
Norman Sartorius,  
Julio Arboleda-Flórez, et al.  
Wiley-Blackwell. 2012.  
£69.99 (hb). 348 pp.  
ISBN: 9781119953548

This is a potentially important publication by an expert group who have transformed a large-scale international review into a book. A powerful impetus for the review came from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The stated focus of the book is on how legislation can be used to advance the rights and entitlements that people with mental health problems have as citizens.

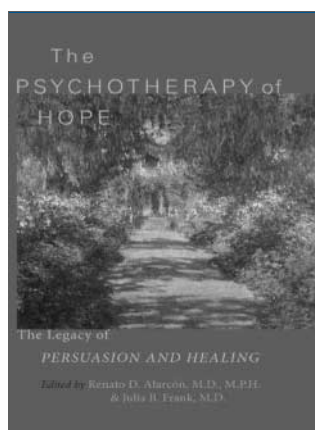
The chapters are relatively short – apart from two key chapters: ‘Principles and concepts’ and ‘Implementation and enforcement’ – and are written in a fluent and readable style. The way the book is designed means that the reader only needs to read the first half of the book, as the last three chapters comprise an exhaustive review of worldwide legal instruments and legislation, and internet resources. Throughout, examples of international policies and legislation are provided, from large and small, and high-income and low- and middle-income countries alike. Topics covered include work and the workplace, education, housing, social security, and legal capacity. Personally, I felt that the most important chapter was ‘Implementation and enforcement’ regarding legal reforms. Here, the authors discuss rising to the challenge of converting well-meaning rhetoric or legislation into concerted action and reality – the book notes that some countries have very good legislation which is inadequately implemented and is, in a sense, somewhat toothless in its everyday effect.

The authors note that although there are ‘formidable’ obstacles to social justice for people with mental health problems, the book was not intended to be a ‘sombre’ one. Indeed, it is written with optimism, passion and zeal, and is clearly serious about being a catalyst for change at high organisational levels. The book is important for anyone or any organisation looking for an in-depth and critical review of this subject matter. It provides a myriad suggestions on how to address and improve these deeply ingrained societal issues of stigma, discrimination and social injustice for people with mental health problems. Is this a book for everyday practising clinicians? Probably not, as it feels more like a book destined for academic libraries (as the price would suggest). Understandably though, given that it was deliberately written to be a practical and policy-oriented tool

(which I think was achieved), it appears aimed at and more suited for national and governmental organisations, senior managers and policy makers. Because of its international remit, it has obvious potential for a worldwide readership but could well be a very useful text for postgraduates researching this area.

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### The Psychotherapy of Hope: The Legacy of Persuasion and Healing

Edited by Renato D. Alarcón  
& Julia B. Frank  
Johns Hopkins University Press.  
2011. £28.50 (hb). 368 pp.  
ISBN: 9780520269453

The cover illustration of this book is a beautiful and dreamy Monet: *The Garden Path at Giverny*. A path, banked by flowers, leads to an impression of a white house. The painting’s effect is a clue to the message of this book – that instilling hope and expectations of a good outcome are essential for patients to improve with psychotherapy.

The title requires some explanation. *Persuasion and Healing*<sup>1</sup> is a book published in 1961 by the American psychiatrist and academic Jerome Frank. Its main contentions were: different psychotherapies have similar (good) outcomes; factors common to all therapies are responsible for their main effect; and instilling hope in ‘demoralised’ patients is crucially important. The text under review is a collection of stand-alone essays by multiple authors that update and reassess Frank’s ideas.

*The Psychotherapy of Hope* is a diverse book that samples the whole spectrum of psychiatry, with essays ranging from ‘Neural substrates of psychotherapy’ to ‘Psychotherapy, religion and spirituality’. Refreshingly, the editors have gathered essays that sometimes express opposing views, for example, on the question of the importance of the unconscious or conscious mind in patients’ difficulties.

The heart of the book is psychiatry and therapy – assessing the evidence, educating about the nature of psychiatric illness and examining effective approaches for practitioners. One excellent essay argues that standard classifications of depression do not help guide what approach to take, as people who “‘meet criteria” may differ from one another to an extraordinary degree.’ It then proposes a clinically helpful reclassification of depression in medical patients, derived from factor analysis, which has three syndromes (grief, anhedonic depression, and demoralisation) and outlines their treatment.