Book Reviews

Eating Disorders: Detection and Treatment.

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Cynthia Bulik's approach to eating disorders unselfconsciously rests on medical model assumptions. She writes about the "illness" of anorexia, the "diagnostic criteria" for discrete "disorders", of "sub-clinical" conditions and "full-blown symptomology", of "patients" to be "screened" and "assessed", and of "clinicians" to provide "outpatient treatment", "inpatient treatment", and "rehabilitation".

While generally understood to be psychosocial in origin, eating disorders clearly inscribe the body in painful and dangerous ways. Some women literally starve themselves to death; others suffer as a result of destabilising their bodies through inappropriately using laxatives, emetics, diuretics, or through exercising too hard and dieting too much. For this reason, I would welcome an approach that could seriously attend to the biological as well as the psychological and cultural aspects of eating disorders. However, the medical model does not accomplish this. On the positive side, it leads the author to pay due attention to the "medical complications" or negative health consequences of eating disorders. On the negative side, when used as a silent metaphor to understand the psychology of eating disorders it generates a narrow approach to the problem. Automatically, patients are cast as the passive recipients of the expert clinician's care. A rational and orderly approach is prescribed for helping the patient to correct her responses to environmental cues that have precipitated dieting, binges, and purges. Bulik writes with an authoritative style that, despite disclaimers, could lead the less experienced reader to assume that her approach is the only approach. Psychotherapy approaches other than cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and interpersonal therapy (IPT) are dismissed (and not even named) with the dubious claim that, "two forms of psychotherapy are superior to others" (p. 73) — that is, CBT & IPT.

I agree that cognitive-behavioural therapy has a lot to offer, but I think it has limitations. While Bulik takes care to acknowledge the importance of cultural conditions which cultivate eating disorders, there seems to be little room for attending to this sociocultural dimension within her therapeutic approach. How do we understand the complex processes at work which enable the social to become individual, the 'outside' to become 'inside'? Can a therapy approach be successful if it ignores this dimension at the practical level? Bulik advocates a psychoeducational approach, but as she acknowledges, the message that the current Western cultural obsession with thinness is inappropriate is not always easy for women with eating disorders to accept. Furthermore, some theorists argue that anorexia is a protest against cultural ideals of slimness, rather than an obedient submission to these ideals (e.g., Grosz, 1995). In exploring questions about how cultural standards become deeply held personal burdens, through

compliance and/or resistance, I think the feminist psychodynamic and narrative approaches offer important insights.

It is particularly disappointing that the feminist psychodynamic approaches to eating disorders are ignored. Susie Orbach's (1978) seminal *Fat is a feminist issue* continues to influence therapists as well as women confronting their own uncomfortable eating. Although controversial among feminists (e.g., Haines, 1987), Orbach's work clarifies the possible logic of why some women may be unable to stop compulsive eating, despite successfully changing conscious beliefs and thoughts. Without being sensitive to the possibility of 'not conscious' influences on behaviour, the strict cognitive-behavioural approach will arguably be limited in its potential to be effective with some women.

On the other hand, the book offers a clear and straightforward approach to working with eating disorders. Bulik draws on clinical as well as research experience in promoting cognitive-behavioural therapy as well as additional practical suggestions for helping women on the path towards overcoming anorexia. A step-by-step guide to the cognitive-behavioural approach is illustrated by case vignettes, and accompanied by examples of therapeutic accessories such as self-monitoring sheets, thought-restructuring sheets, and panic cards.

There is one important theme in this book that would most likely have been absent from earlier texts in the area. Bulik strongly promotes the important message that dieting must be discouraged. In discussing the dilemma facing practitioners who are met with requests from clients for help in losing weight, she reflects that: "It is disheartening to think that what was once believed to be sound clinical practice may actually have contributed to iatrogenic eating disturbances" (p. 32). Rather, she notes, "patients should be informed that dieting *per se* is in fact the best way to *gain* weight" (p. 33).

The appendices, (A) "Anorexia: The facts", and (B) "Bulimia: The facts", are useful additions to the book. I particularly liked their careful attention to the negative health effects of dieting and of the use of diuretics, emetics, and laxatives.

To some outsiders eating disorders appear trivial and indulgent; yet anorexia and bulimia can be painfully all-consuming to the point of death. This book is aimed at a wide range of professionals who may come into contact with women and girls experiencing eating disorders. *Eating disorders* is a practical informative text that will be a useful resource for psychology students and clinical psychologists new to work in this area, particulary if read alongside complementary texts such as *Fat is a feminist issue*.

References

Grosz, Elizabeth. (1995). Psychoanalysis and the imaginary body. In Penny Florence & Dee Reynolds (Eds.) *Feminist subjects, multi-media cultural methodologies* (pp. 183-196). Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

Haines, Hilary. (1987). *Mental health for women*. Auckland: Reed Methuen.

Orbach, Susie. (1978). *Fat is a feminist issue*. London: Hamlyn.

Applying Psychology: Lessons from Asia-Oceania

Graham Davidson (ed.) (1994)
Carlton, VIC: Australian Psychological Society
170pp. ISBN 0 909881 05 7

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This slim volume is a set of 11 papers selected from a programme offered at what is described as the first Asian Conference in Psychology, held in Singapore in 1992. The topics span personality assessment, counselling and health psychology, and a common focus is a culture as a mediator in applying Western psychology in indigenous Asian settings. Davidson argues that the cross-cultural application of a Western psychology can only succeed when it allows for 'indigenous constructions' and 'empowerment'. Turtle complicates the picture slightly by arguing that any given Eastern indigenisation of Western psychology is a matter of degree, and may not be inevitable. Eastern cultures themselves are undergoing social change.

Blowers reports how Freudian psychology was transformed in China in the 1920s and 1930s, but also includes interesting comments on the historical development of psychology in that country.

The remaining papers deal with issues more specific in terms of research areas. Yik and Bond present data indicating Western-Chinese differences in the ways that person perception operates. Yau, Blay and Dea show how Eastern therapeutic concepts have developed out

of Taoist and Buddhist philosophies, while Tan looks at how paradoxical thinking, already used in Western therapy, is even stronger in Chinese philosophy and therefore clearly useful as a Chinese therapeutic device. Other papers deal with: the benefits of tai-chi; the link between possession illnesses in India and socio-cultural variables; factors affecting the degree of success of interethnic marriages between Australians and either Malays or Filipinas; and cross-cultural variations in health risk behaviours.

The book suffers, like most printed proceedings, from the absence of a subject index, an author index and a consolidated set of references. The theoretical overview provided by the editor is interesting, but might have been expanded. Nevertheless, the book is a worthwhile contribution to the cross-cultural psychological literature, and has the virtue of addressing some of the questions which confront the researcher who moves from West to East.

Understanding Soccer Hooliganism

John H. Kerr (1994)
Buckingham: Open University
129pp. ISBN 0 335 19249 1

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Soccer hooliganism appears to be a quite recent English phenomenon. Its occurrence in Western Europe is less frequent, while elsewhere in the United Kingdom soccer violence is usually based on sectarian divisions. A hooligan, unlike a fan or supporter, goes to a match to actually engage in aggression or violence - and this can take place before, during or after a game. The acts are partially planned rather than spontaneous events.

Various perspectives on soccer hooliganism are presented, including Marsh's (1978) classic depiction of the highly organised structure of hooligan gangs and the ritualised nature of inter-gang conflict. Kerr's preference is to propose an account based on reversal theory (Apter, 1982), which is an attempt to account for motivation and the experience of emotions in

phenomenological terms. Both situational and personality forms of explanation are enmeshed in this approach. A reversal is a sudden switch that can occur in a person's underlying motivational state. Reversal theory is a fairly general, but little known, psychophysiological account of motivation. It is thrust quite suddenly on the reader as the best way to understand what drives the soccer hooligan. For this reviewer there are problems with this theory, not the least of which is a set of strange terms: 'metamotivational states', 'bistability', 'parapathic emotions', 'protective frames'. In turn, metamotivational states come in pairs: 'telic-paratelic', 'negativism-conformity', 'sympathy-mastery', 'autic-alloic'. Although these terms are defined, the buttress of quoted research pointing to their validity or usefulness is narrow. Since I have not read Apter's work, I do not know how well he argues for reversal theory.

The relevance of motivational constructs at an individual level of analysis cannot be set aside. Put very baldly, boredom sets off an opposing force, the pursuit of excitement (cf. Berlyne, 1960). Kerr argues that modern society more and more is limiting the options for youth to engage in arousal-seeking behaviour. The soccer hooligan is a special case of a young person engaged in the pursuit of excitement, driven by thrill-seeking and risk-taking states. The more extreme experience of destructive pleasure in the hooligan may share features with that sometimes found in the delinquent or the vandal.

Situational cues at a crowded soccer ground which serve to heighten the hooligan's level of arousal include crowd movement (such as sudden surges), a police presence, the attire of both fans and other hooligans, empathy with a team, and the chanting of fans. Other issues addressed are the role of political affiliations among hooligans, whether hooligans are 'yobs', the role of the media as a backdrop, and whether soccer 'superthugs' are actually psychopaths.

In sum, this is an interesting psychological contribution to the literature dealing with the football hooligan, even though the argument rests uneasily at times on an unfashionable theory of motivation.

References

Berlyne, D. E. (1960). *Conflict, arousal, and curiosity.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Marsh, P. (1978). Aggro: *The illusion of violence.* London: Dent.

Apter, M. J. (1982). *The experience of motivation: The theory of psychological reversals.* London: Academic Press.

Social Psychology of Groups: A Reader

**Edward Lawler & Barry Markovsky (eds.)
(1993)
Greenwich, CT: JAI Press
277pp. ISBN 1 55938 754 8**

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The context for social psychology here is as the sociologist sees it. There is a preface and ten papers selected from the first six volumes (1984-89) of the annual series Advances in Group Processes (JAI Press). The topics range across status cues (including dyadic interactions); role differentiation (Bales and beyond); effects of mental illness as a label; moral choices (a refreshing change from Stoner's dilemmas), dissent, creativity and the role of minorities; power and coalition formation; social dilemmas; family networks and divorce; social movements; and generational conflict.

Some authors may be known to psychologists: Joseph Berger, Sanford Dornbusch, Charlan Nemeth (a psychologist) and Ralph Turner. The editor notes that social psychology has an inter-disciplinary heritage of writers such as Cooley, Homans, Lewin, Mead, and Thibaut and Kelley. The editor further suggests that sociologists, in contrast to psychologists, approach social psychology with more emphasis on the role of the social structure (e.g., the effects of status, role, power), and with a higher theory-to-data ratio. Both of these claims are debatable, since modern European psychologists have been very interested in societal variables, and both European and American psychologists can pull out theories like rabbits out of a hat. In any event, if there is one field where the editor's claims are shaky it is the study of social groups - for instance, take the example of Michael Hogg's (1993) work, a psychological treatise which is rich in social structural detail and replete with theory.

What is more likely to be true is that sociologists and psychologists are not inclined to read each others' work. In this sense, the paper by Berger et al. on 'Status cues, expectations and behaviour' and that by Turner and Colomy on 'Role differentiation: orientation principles' are poles apart. The former read psychology and latter appear not to do so.

So, should social psychologists in psychology departments attend to this work? Yes, since there is good material in here. The papers have sufficient depth to interest both the graduate student and the researcher, and sociological sources should not be ignored in the context of group theory and research.

Reference

Hogg, M.A. (1993). *The social psychology of group cohesiveness: From attraction to social identity.* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Analyzing tabular data: Loglinear and logistic models for social researchers

**Nigel Gilbert.
London: UCL Press Limited, 1993.
ISBN 1-85728-091-1 PB**

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This little book is a valuable introduction to handling tables of frequency counts of people, events and classifications. A lot of psychological research avoids categorical information, perhaps because we don't know how to handle this type of data or perhaps because we look down on what seems to be nonquantitative data. Certainly our undergraduate courses concentrate on hypothesis-testing and planned designs with intricate comparisons of means, and usually slighter attention to categorical analysis beyond two dimensional chi square tables.

This paperback represents a 10-lecture second-year course for social science students, "including sociology, geography, social psychology, policy analysis and allied disciplines". It presumes a little elementary knowledge about sampling, distributions and inference, and some experience of managing data with computer packages, but given that background, offers a good understanding of testing theories about data in complex tables. Each chapter defines concepts clearly, showing how concepts are used in research and theory; eliminating ambiguities quickly, and presenting a major example using real data, analysed step by step with possible alternatives pointed out along the way. Each chapter has a good short

summary and explains the computer program to analyse the chapter's example with the SPSS and GLIM packages (on disk from the author for an extra 10 pounds sterling).

The approach to research here, of course, is very different to the experimental one of classical psychology and biological science. In this social research framework, hypotheses are not rejected at the 5% level or smaller, but models are serially fitted to the data, hoping for a fit at the "5% level or higher", achieving a smaller statistic than the 5% criterion, and thus showing that the "model is adequate" in explaining trends in the data. My suspicion is that some students would find this approach to research in conflict with their understanding of rejecting null hypotheses and so on. Sampling for good social description is also different to normal psychology sampling: we typically define our special group of study and then randomly or even exhaustively sample within this definition. Our conclusions are as good as our definitions. But for societal research, balanced stratified samples are needed, and checks have to be made to ensure the actual sample reflects proportions within the population. The author discusses such sample problems and artificial ("structural") values in table entries, and the stratified or topological models to deal with these problems, and applying corrections to badly atypical sampling ("clustering", "design effects"), and, as on other issues, refers us to Bishop, Fienberg and Holland (1975) for further enlightenment in much the same way psychology texts used to refer to Winer.

On explaining G2 and loglinear hierarchical models, using residuals, odds ratio, and logistic regression, Gilbert has done a good job for the cautious student. Persistence is needed, but, I think, rewarded. In particular, Gilbert spends time elaborating the difference between the "real world" and the "imaginary model" of the world which will help many students appreciate the logical position of social researchers modelling their world. The clear specification of designs for main effects, association and interaction models is very good. Examples of social mobility, sex and divorce, class and medical advice, and others, are all handled technically well and with common sense interpretations. And Gilbert certainly is quite open about alternative explanations, vagaries in forward selection of models, importance versus significance, choices reflecting sensible social theorising, and so on. There are some silly minor errors in tables and elsewhere, but overall, care and attention to clarity is evident.

Reference

Bishop, Y.M.M., Fienberg, S.E., and Holland, P.W., 1975. *Discrete multivariate analysis*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.