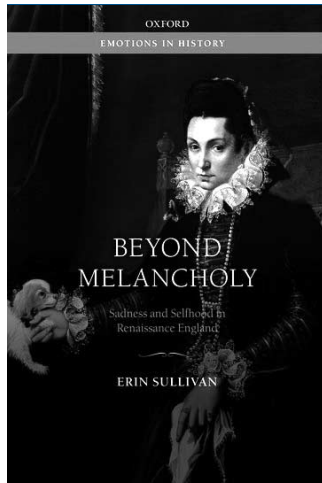


Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode
and Rosalind Ramsay



Beyond Melancholy: Sadness and Selfhood in Renaissance England

By Erin Sullivan.
Oxford University Press. 2016.
£60.00 (hb). 256 pp.
ISBN 9780198739654

Most psychiatrists would probably agree that the current official conception of mood disorders leaves much to be desired. Two recent pieces of evidence support this proposition: first, the controversy surrounding the removal of the clause in the DSM-5 definition of depression which excluded the recently bereaved from attracting this diagnosis; second, the fact that the Wellcome Trust recently allocated almost £5 million to investigate the hypothesis that depression comprises several different disorders which simply share the symptom of low mood.

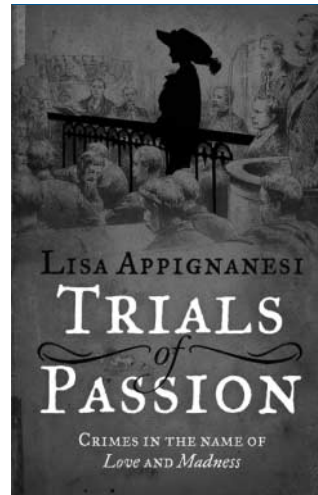
Thus, the publication of this book in OUP's *Emotions in History* series is timely. The author, Erin Sullivan, is a cultural historian and literary scholar at the Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham. The title of the book implies both a similar premise to the Wellcome Trust's project and a move beyond Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). The book is structured around the distinctions made by Renaissance writers – literary as well as medical and religious – with chapters on grief, melancholy, godly sorrow, and despair. Each of these begins with a case study of each condition which is then discussed in great detail and with reference to a large quantity of fascinating contemporary source material. For example, the chapter on grief begins with the death of Margaret Radcliffe who died shortly after her twin brother, the bereavement literally tugging at her heart strings: an autopsy found 'all well and sounde, saving certeyne stringes striped all over her harte'. Two further examples from the wealth provided are the substantial number of deaths attributed to 'Griefe' in the 17th century Bills of Mortality and a consideration of the passions and madness – the belief that grief brought humans closer to animals and unable to think, ultimately leading to distraction.

Indeed, the profusion of sources makes this book slightly hard to digest for the non-specialist, rather like my (as yet, unsuccessful) attempts with *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. However, revisiting Burton, I am struck by a very pertinent comment: 'What a disease is, almost every physician defines. . . . How many diseases there are, is a question not yet determined'. This is exactly what every clinician does day-to-day, encountering the individual sitting in front of them and not being hide-bound by psychiatric taxonomies. This book has helped me further appreciate the

complexity of human emotions and has shown me the relevance of an unfamiliar period of history to my daily clinical practice.

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doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.116.187922



Trials of Passion: Crimes in the Name of Love and Madness

By Lisa Appignanesi. Virago Press.
2014. £16.59 (hb). 448 pp.
ISBN 9781844088744

'This is the story of crimes that grew out of passion, their perpetrators and the courtroom dramas in which they were enmeshed'. With these stirring words Lisa Appignanesi introduces her study of how the justice process invited doctors to become 'experts' in human passion, and how both the justice process and the medical process were affected by gender blindness. This is a road well travelled, not least by Appignanesi herself who previously published a book entitled *Mad, Bad and Sad* on similar themes.

In this book, she describes famous 19th-century murder trials, in which she believes gender role stereotypes played a vital part in the expert evidence. The cases nearly all involve the homicide of a family member or partner; what is sometimes bluntly called 'domestic homicide'. She emphasises especially those French cases where the emotions could be said to have abolished culpability, and how women's perceived emotional states could be used in expert testimony against them. Appignanesi uses these cases as evidence that the criminal justice process sees crime through a masculine lens, with masculinity as the norm. Inevitably, psychiatrists who act as experts in this process have a similarly limited perspective; in fact, they may be doubly 'blinded' because their concepts of mental illness and irrationality are also seen through a masculine lens.

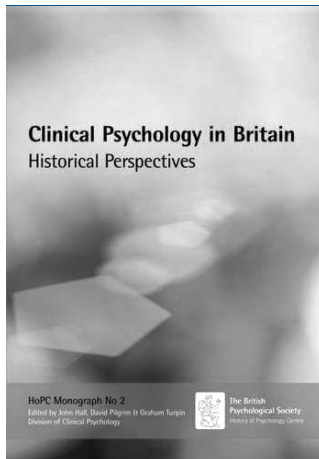
Appignanesi claims that female defendants were disadvantaged then, and are probably disadvantaged now, and there are contemporary voices from mental health and criminology who agree with her. The past 30 years have seen an expansion of psychiatric services for women offenders, that take account of women's experience of trauma; an experience that may explain their so called 'irrationality'.

This is an engaging and well-written book, which I enjoyed reading. I was left with the question: is it really ever normal to kill someone you have loved? In a recent article for the *Daily Mail*, a psychiatrist took the view that it was 'understandable' that a man might kill a wife who had left him; but could this be the same as

non-culpable? Any psychiatrist giving evidence in the criminal court should check their prejudice, as the saying goes: and it goes both ways. Just as it may be unsafe to assume a woman is mad because she has killed someone, it may be unsafe to assume a man is bad because he is violent, especially when it comes to domestic homicide.

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doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.115.178384



Clinical Psychology in Britain: Historical Perspectives

Edited by John Hall, David Pilgrim & Graham Turpin.
British Psychological Society. 2015.
£21.99 (pb). 395 pp.
ISBN 97819854337313

This book is the place to look for an account of the history of clinical psychology, as it presents the first historical account of the discipline in Britain. It provides an understanding of the developments in the field which reflect the professions of the contributors to the book. These include historians, academic sociologists and academic psychologists, although the vast majority of authors are clinical psychologists who have played a significant role in the development of the profession over the past 30 years.

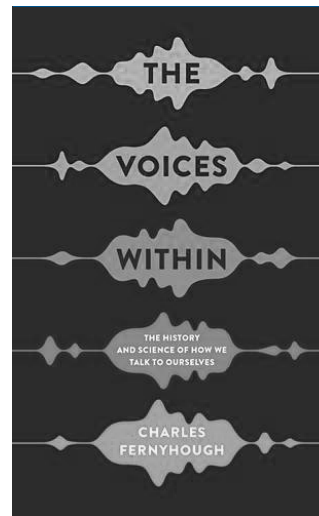
Edited volumes in the history of science often receive criticism for being somewhat inconsistent, in terms of the information presented in each chapter and the styles in which they are written. This stems from the variety of different contributors and, as the editors have alluded to in the closing pages, the tendency for authors who actively practise the profession to slip into uncritical 'Whiggish' narratives on how the profession has progressed. However, the lack of interest in clinical psychology by professional historians has effectively left its vibrant and often fascinating history to those who practise it. One slight criticism of this work is that there is often a tendency to overlook other professions on which psychologists undoubtedly relied as the field developed since the Second World War. For instance, John Hall's chapter is the only section which briefly touches upon the fact that clinical psychologists often rely on the help of psychiatrists, occupational therapists, social workers and mental health nurses, on whom there is a relative wealth of literature, and whose professions have, similar to clinical psychology, rapidly developed since the introduction of the British welfare state in the late 1940s (see for example McCrae & Nolan's 2016 book *The Story of Nursing in British Mental Hospitals: Echoes from the Corridors*).

However, the relatively eclectic nature of this book does reveal some fascinating aspects of the profession, especially on how it emerged from the eugenicist ideas of the late-19th and early 20th centuries and how the National Health Service was essential

for the rapid development of clinical psychology in Britain. This work successfully highlights important individuals to the profession who have otherwise been overlooked, a prime example being William McDougall (1871–1938), who was one of the 'most celebrated' psychologists in the first half of the 20th century but has now been largely forgotten by professionals in the field. This book should become a central resource for anyone wishing to take forward the history of clinical psychology.

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doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.116.192955



The Voices Within: The History and Science of How We Talk to Ourselves

By Charles Fernyhough
Profile Books. 2016.
£16.99 (hb). 352 pp.
ISBN 9781781252796

This is a truly exceptional book for its scope, richness of detail and originality. It is about inner speech, a subject that is central to our understanding of the nature, phenomenology and origins of auditory verbal hallucinations. Fernyhough says of his goal: 'I want to ask what it is like to have this sort of thing going on in your head [inner speech]. I want to investigate how it feels to be caught up in the flow of impressions, ideas and internal utterances that make up our stream of consciousness'. And he does just that. Furthermore, he persuades us (if we ever needed persuading) that 'Talking to ourselves is a part of human experience which, although by no means universal, seems to play many different roles in our mental lives'.

I was surprised to discover that less than a quarter of us engage in inner speech. But, it was not much of a surprise that the four distinct categories of inner speech are the faithful friend, the ambivalent parent, the proud rival and the calm optimist. The function of inner speech at the very least includes the regulation of action and the capacity to take different perspectives. There appears to be a developmental dimension to the role of inner speech in regulating behaviour. Fernyhough relies on Vygotsky's theory on the transition of social speech to private speech (that is speech that acts as a tool to assist a child in performing particular tasks), and ultimately into inner speech. Accompanying this transition is a significant transformation in the form of utterances such that they become abbreviated, even truncated, but yet retaining a dialogic aspect.

Fernyhough is at his very best when dealing with inner speech. The interest from a psychiatrist's point of view lies in the fact that auditory verbal hallucinations are currently conceived of as inner