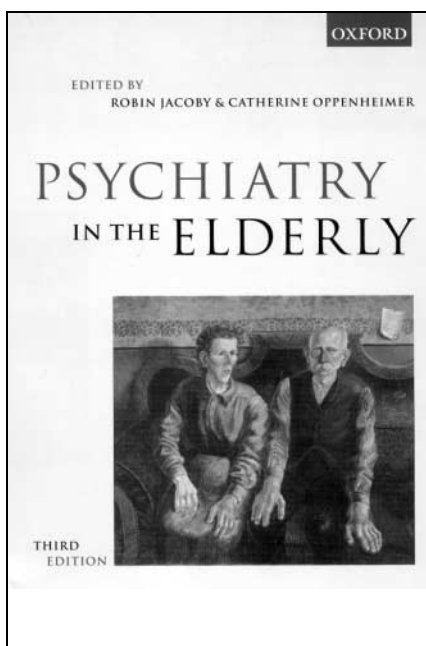


## Book reviews

EDITED BY SIDNEY CROWN, FEMI OYEBODE and ROSALIND RAMSAY

### Psychiatry in the Elderly (3rd edn)

Edited by Robin Jacoby  
& Catherine Oppenheimer. Oxford:  
Oxford University Press. 2002.  
1018 pp. £120.00 (hb), £59.50 (pb).  
ISBN 0 19 263151 9 (hb), 0 19 851563 4 (pb)



In their preface the editors express the hope that their book reflects the development of old age psychiatry as a speciality. I think that they have gone some way towards this aim. This is a weighty and worthy tome, ambitious in its range. The spread of contributors is impressive, including both old stalwarts and newer, less-familiar names. The topics covered are almost all that one could wish for in a single-volume reference book, and more. It seems churlish to pick on the gaps, but sleep disorders and services to ethnic elders might merit more space in the next edition.

It took me a long time to produce this review, and my difficulty reflects the essence of the book: it is not one to rush, and it needs time to digest, to refer back and to savour. It is an investment, not an impulse buy. I enjoyed Catherine Oppenheimer's chapter on sexuality in old age. It

is good to see 25 pages devoted to a relatively neglected area; one that, I predict, will become more of an issue in the future. I learned a lot from Desmond O'Neill's 'Driving and psychiatric illness in later life'. In my time working in central Manchester I rarely met an elderly person who was still driving (perhaps those who could afford to drive could also afford to move elsewhere?) but I had to learn fast when I moved to Wolverhampton, and I found this chapter useful, practical and thought-provoking. The case histories bring the chapters on psychotherapy treatment to life, and the quotations from carers in Harry Cayton's chapter are particularly moving and memorable.

I don't recommend this book for bedtime reading (although it might be an alternative to a weight-training session in the gym). I regard it as an essential reference book, both for dipping into during idle moments, and for vital information when asked tricky questions by your trainee. If you own a previous edition, you will be missing out if you don't replace it. I recommend a hardback copy for your library and the paperback for your own bookshelf.

**Susan M. Benbow** Consultant Psychiatrist  
(Old Age Psychiatry), Penn Hospital, Penn Road,  
Wolverhampton WV4 5HN, UK

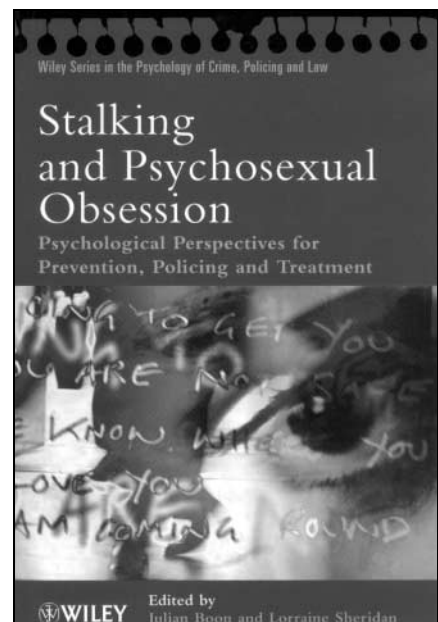
### Stalking and Psychosexual Obsession: Psychological Perspectives for Prevention, Policing and Treatment

Edited by Julian Boon & Lorraine Sheridan.  
Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. 2002. 248 pp.  
£19.99 (pb). ISBN 0 471 49459 3

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 was introduced to provide some protection for victims of stalking. The introduction of the Act coincided with an increasing interest in and focus on stalking within the media and the psychiatric community. This

book is a welcome addition to the existing literature, providing an international perspective, with authors from a number of countries (Australia, Canada, Italy, The Netherlands, the UK and the USA) and from a variety of backgrounds (including forensic psychology, the law, the police force and criminology). As the title suggests, the book focuses mainly on stalking behaviours rather than 'psychosexual obsession', which is not clearly defined in the book, but which is often used synonymously. Some contributions are very good, but others do not work so well. I particularly like the Pathé & Mullen chapter, which provides a comprehensive and scholarly overview of victims of stalking, largely derived from their own seminal work in this area. As well as describing the typology of victims, they turn their attention to the secondary victims (a much-neglected group), who include family members and work colleagues, and who often become targets themselves.

Cyberstalking is a growth area and has a whole chapter devoted to it. The problem of cyberstalking mainly affects children and young people. It is not yet clear whether its effects are different from those of the more conventional forms of stalking, although preliminary data suggest that cyberstalking has a less distressing impact on the victim. One obvious difference is that cyberstalked victims are unlikely to be confronted by a violent assailant, unlike 'true' stalking victims. In his chapter on stalking and violence, Reid-Meloy suggests that for most victims of stalking the risk of violence is so



high that clinicians should assume that an act of interpersonal violence will occur at some point. The risk of violence and physical injury is higher for the victims of domestic violence who are stalked by former partners. Other predictors of violence by stalkers are similar to the predictors of violence in other populations, in particular a history of criminal convictions and substance misuse. Interestingly, and perhaps contrary to popular stereotypes, stalking behaviours are less likely to be perpetrated by individuals with a psychotic illness than by those with a non-psychotic mental illness.

Kropp *et al*'s chapter on the management of stalkers adopts a Canadian perspective and applies the principles of risk management using a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary perspective. It is helpful that the authors emphasise the importance of working with victims and view a victim's 'safety planning' as an essential aspect of risk management, as this is an area that is often neglected.

There is no real evidence that psychological therapies are effective in the treatment of stalkers, perhaps because it is not clear what, if anything, is wrong with their psychiatric health. Most discussion in the book about treatment approaches adopts a cognitive-behavioural perspective. It would have been helpful to have included a psychodynamic analysis of stalking behaviours, particularly considering the growing

evidence for a relationship between stalking behaviour and security of attachment, with implications for interventions and risk management.

Other subjects discussed in the book include: erotomania in women, stalking in children and adolescents, aspects of police care and characteristics of stalkers. A minor criticism is that references are provided at the end of each chapter which, given the lack of authoritative research in this area, means that the same names crop up time after time. The overall editing of the book is also lax, with frequent repetitions between the chapters and without any attempt to link or cross-reference across chapters, making the book seem fragmented. Although this volume provides a reasonable introduction to the subject, with some excellent chapters, for the definitive account I would refer the reader to Mullen *et al* (2002), a book that has yet to be bettered.

**Mullen, P. E., Pathé, M. & Purcell, R. (2002)** *Stalkers and their Victims*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Gillian Mezey** Senior Lecturer and Consultant, Forensic & Personality Disorder Group, Department of Psychiatry, St George's Hospital Medical School, Cranmer Terrace, London SW17 0RE, UK

## Books received

### **Electroconvulsive Therapy (4th edn)**

By Richard Abrams. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2002. 338 pp. £49.50 (hb). ISBN 0 19 514820 7

### **Psychoneuroendocrinology. The Scientific Basis of Clinical Practice**

Edited by Owen M. Wolkowitz & Anthony J. Rothschild. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing. 2003. 592 pp. £69 (pb). ISBN 0 88048 857 3

### **Theory and Practice of Psychiatry**

By Bruce J. Cohen. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003. 558 pp. £70.00 (hb), £37.50 (pb). ISBN 0 19 514937 8 (hb), 0 19 514938 6 (pb)

### **Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (4th edn)**

Edited by Michael Rutter & Eric Taylor. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 2002. 1224 pp. £55 (hb). ISBN 0 632 05361 5