Book Reviews

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For bibliophiles, historians, and authors interested in forensic behavioral science, legal medicine, and related areas of practice, this 178 page reference is a valuable resource. The editor, together with the compiler Joan McKenzie and with the aid of the noted book expert John Gach, has made available the titles in the unexcelled once privately held library of Robert Sadoff, M.D., a nationally renowned collector of modern and antique books in the foregoing as well as related areas. His collection was accumulated over many years, and in October 2002 ownership was transferred to the College of Physicians of Philadelphia (CPP), where the library is presently available for use by scholars. Inquiries to CPP about the Sadoff collection can be made by phone (215-563-3737 x297) or email (cppref@collphyphil.org).

The contents of this catalog, certain of which are relevant to hypnosis, are alphabetically arranged in sections from the 18th to the 20th Century. (There is a readily discernible typographical error in that the final pages, 175-178, of the latter are erroneously listed as the former). Information is provided about the authors’ full names, their dates of birth and death, the name of the publishers and cities where the books were published, as well as the number of pages and sizes of each title. Illustrations of some of the books are also printed.

For professionals interested in hypnosis, additional bibliographies of books more specifically pertaining to this modality are available elsewhere. These would include, above all, the catalogs of the extensive collections of the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland, and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Other comprehensive compilations of hypnosis books, not all of which are still in print, have been published by Albert Caillet (1912), Adam Crabtree (1988), Max Dessoir (1888), and Maurice Tinterow (1983). In addition, some individuals have listed the hypnosis titles in their personal libraries, such as the collection of Melvin A. Gravitz that contains more than 2,000 titles on hypnosis.


Peter Hawkins is a founder director and currently President of the European School of Psychotherapy. He is also a visiting professor in hypnosis and psychotherapy at ISMAI in Portugal. In his Preface, Hawkins makes clear that his book was written for practicing clinicians, with the hope to “stimulate their inner creativities and imaginations,” and in so doing “to assist patients to utilize their own resources to find solutions to their stress-related problems.” The book is divided into eight chapters, entitled Contextual Understandings; Hypnosis and Stress; The Hypnosis Session; Clinical Issues; Ego-Strengthening; Hypnoanalytic Approaches; Treatment of Specific Problems (2 chapters); and Children and Families.

The author paints on a very broad canvas, offering a brief history of hypnosis, comments on the sociopolitical context in which it is carried out; the limitations of research, and the use of hypnotic suggestion for a wide variety of disorders and client groups, including children and families. This is both the strength and weakness of the book. That is, while it is interesting to read about the author’s views on a wide variety of topics, the book ends up too broad in scope, acknowledging the utility of direct and indirect suggestion, dynamic and hypnoanalytical approaches, and state and non-state viewpoints (i.e. referring to ‘trance’ but also the importance of expectation and belief). A sense of this is captured in Hawkins’ description of his approach as humanistic, phenomenological and integrative, incorporating cognitive-behavioral as well as generic dynamic strategies.

The book ends up just scratching the surface of some issues and clinical conditions (e.g. only a half page is devoted to eating disorders), but Hawkins offers 62 partial scripts that many clinicians will find useful in their day to day practice. Despite advocating the use of scripts, he acknowledges the influence of Milton Erickson and Ernest Rossi, and the scripts are replete with Rossi’s use of the implied directive and the search for “inner resources.” Although Freud’s work is referred to on 12 occasions, Hawkins view of the unconscious is far more Rogerian and Jungian, making numerous references to its benign, yet helpful, nature as a repository of abilities and resources that it is the therapist’s job to help the client access. And Hawkins does an admirable job of this. Indeed, within minutes of reading Chapter 7, this reviewer found Scripts 45-48 to be very helpful with a patient. The author also uses brief case studies to show how hypnotic suggestion can be used.

In summary, the subtitle says it all: this book is a guide for clinicians. This reviewer would have much preferred the book to cover fewer topics, but in more depth, such as anxiety and psychosomatic disorders. There is no pretence to it reviewing theory or research.
topics in depth, but the very wide and surface coverage of clinical conditions probably makes it most useful for clinicians who want an introduction to how hypnosis can be used in their day to day practice.


My life was changed in dramatic ways by the wisdom of Milton H. Erickson, M.D., even though, like several of the contributors to this book, I did not have an opportunity to study with him personally. Instead, I immersed myself in his writings, watched videos of his work, listened to audio tapes of his lectures, and attended workshops and conferences in an effort to learn what guided his remarkable hypnotic and psychotherapeutic interventions. When all was said and done, however, I was still dissatisfied. I still felt like I did not know some essential ingredient.

*Milton H. Erickson, M.D.: An American Healer* provides a taste of that ingredient. It presents a picture of Erickson as a person, thereby unveiling some of the attitudes and values that suffused and directed his relationships with others. It shows how he learned to heal by healing himself and then used that knowledge to help others learn how to heal themselves as well. This book is an unusual but engagingly eclectic and carefully chosen collection. It contains personal tributes from Erickson’s family, friends, and colleagues as well as examples of his favorite jokes, family photographs, passages from his diary as a young man, and letters written to his young grandchildren. His 1965 *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* article which summarized his explorations of the trance state with Aldous Huxley is reprinted here, as is a transcript and DVD of a demonstration of the clinical use of hypnosis that he did in 1958.

The primary editor and one of the principal contributors to this volume is Erickson’s daughter, Betty Alice Erickson, M.S., a licensed professional counselor and international teacher of Ericksonian psychotherapy and hypnosis. Bradford Keeney, Ph.D., a family therapist, author, and editor of the Profiles in Healing series also serves as an editor and contributor to this text.

This book captured my interest from the beginning. The Preface, for example, is a touchingly personal, yet professionally insightful description of Erickson by his widow, Elizabeth Moore Erickson. Among other things, she describes her husband’s dedication to hard work, his appreciation of the resources people carry within, his careful observations of others, his love of life, and his many thoughtful and romantic gestures throughout their marriage. As the central figure in Erickson’s life, it is not surprising that she manages to convey more about his basic nature in fewer words than any of the other contributors.

After Bradford Keeney explains in the Introduction how Erickson’s style relates to the traditional ideas and roles of a healer, three of Erickson’s children (Betty Alice Erickson, Roxanna Erickson Klein, and Alan Erickson) offer a series of illustrative personal anecdotes from their childhood, each of which demonstrates one of Erickson’s basic propositions or teachings, such as the idea that nobody knows the future, that hard work is necessary, that you must make the most of your life and explore the world around you, that you must learn or wither, that you must build on your strengths, that people have the ability to heal themselves, that the only enduring pleasure is learning, and that all fear comes from the mind. Erickson frequently said that experience is the only teacher, and these childhood memories clearly
demonstrate the way he helped his children learn from their experiences.

Chapter 4 consists of a series of letters Erickson wrote over the years to his grandchildren, letters full of messages to the parents of those grandchildren as well to the grandchildren themselves. Here are clear examples of his personal connection to others; always guiding and teaching as well as endowing the various stages and events of life of each individual with special meaning or significance.

Perhaps the most fascinating and revealing section of this entire book is the excerpts from the diary Erickson kept during his canoe trip from Madison, Wisconsin, down to St. Louis via the Mississippi River and then returning back home up the Illinois River. He took this journey in 1922 when he was 20 years old and still recovering from a nearly fatal case of polio 3 years earlier. The entries in this dairy reveal a young mind already wise beyond his years, already lamenting people wasting time and life while he spends every spare moment reading, observing and learning, already noticing how little faith people have in themselves, already viewing hardships as luxuries, and already dedicating himself to always being as kind to others as others have been to him. They also reveal a remarkably sophisticated understanding of human nature and a willingness to use this understanding for the benefit of all concerned. For example, at one point he describes in great detail how he intentionally behaved in a way that both confused and reassured others and naturally led to a good hearted offer from wary strangers of a place to spend the night. As he says, “very naturally and humanly they took the easiest way out of the matter.” How could this person not become a psychiatrist and hypnotist?

Chapter 6 is a transcript of a demonstration of hypnosis that was originally filmed in 1958 by the Bateson research team. A DVD of this session will come with the book, but is not yet available, and thus I cannot comment on it. I can say, however, on the basis of the transcript alone, that this is yet another example of Erickson’s absolute mastery of hypnotic realities and a wonderful demonstration of his use of those realities to help the subject recognize and appreciate his own abilities. First, Erickson offers subtle cues that elicit specific hypnotic responses, then he points out those responses and the cues that led to them, and finally he asks if the subject is pleased with his own ability to pick up on those little cues and describes his own delight that the subject was able to do so. This affirming focus permeates his work and lies at the root of his role as healer.

Although widely renowned as perhaps the most innovative, effective and influential hypnotist and psychotherapist of all time, Erickson’s role as healer is the central unifying theme of this book, and consequently, the focus of each of the brief but very personal and insightful statements provided by 20 of his colleagues and friends in Chapter 8 (Erickson changed the life of every person in this chapter). He helped them accept themselves, enjoy life, and go far beyond their self-imposed limits. Using trance, stories, and practical jokes he connected to them in a loving and compassionate way that challenged them and allowed them to heal physically, interpersonally, emotionally, and spiritually. Each contributor describes that process slightly differently, but all did so with a deep sense of awe, affection, and appreciation.

Betty Alice Erickson closes the book with a description of how surprised she was when she discovered as a young adult just how famous her father was. Eventually she also came to realize that this ordinary man, her dad with all of his ordinary faults and foibles also had a rather extraordinary ability to connect with and heal others. As she suggests, this ability cannot be reproduced by imitating his techniques or memorizing his publications. What set him apart were the values, understandings, and compassion that he brought with
him when he first began to study hypnosis and psychiatry. These are what defined him as a person, and ultimately, that is what this book is about.

If you just want to learn how to do hypnosis or psychotherapy, this book is not for you. It contains very little instruction or guidance with respect to techniques. On the other hand, if you want to learn how to be a hypnotist or a psychotherapist, if you want to begin to understand what it takes to be a healer, a person who can connect to others and modify their consciousness in ways that promote healing and personal growth, then this book is exactly what you are looking for. It is not a book to read in one sitting. It is a book to savor, taking time to absorb and incorporate the repeated themes and messages of its many different facets. For these and many other reasons, I recommend it highly to all mental health professionals. I also recommend it to anyone who is at all interested in learning more about what being a healer is all about.


How does one write a straightforward review of a work on an elusive subject like ambivalence? Yet, that is precisely what the authors have done here. They have taken a subject at the heart of virtually all therapeutic dilemmas, and attempted to offer a unifying framework to understand and resolve ambivalence in a variety of psychotherapy approaches. The authors, both clinicians and professors at the University of Arizona, begin with the recognition that though resistance to change and non-compliance are central concepts in both psychotherapy and behavioral medicine, there is not a body of research or integrative theory that can usefully answer the question: “why don’t people change.” They propose that understanding and quantifying ambivalence, the simultaneous movement both towards and away from change, can illuminate the dynamics of resistance in psychotherapy.

The book begins with an overview chapter that profiles the prevailing research that has studied resistant ambivalence in psychotherapy, health care and self-directed change. Following that is an exploration of theories of resistance and ambivalence in major schools of psychotherapy, particularly psychoanalytic, cognitive-behavioral, and humanistic/existential.

The authors propose an integrative model of resistant ambivalence that highlights the internal and systemic discrepancies between a ‘desired self’ and ‘should’, ‘feared,’ and ‘reactive’ selves. They conclude that therapists can best understand ambivalence as a state rather than a trait, and that treatment approaches based on empathy and support are more likely to facilitate change than more directive approaches. Another chapter profiles both self-report and therapeutic observation approaches to measuring and assessing ambivalence. In exploring therapeutic approaches to working with resistant ambivalence, the authors highlight Gestalt two-chair work and Motivational Interviewing, and end with a chapter on integrating ambivalence work with other psychotherapies.

Missing from this book is any mention of hypnosis or hypnotically informed psychotherapies. This is unfortunate not just because the interests of *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* readers aren’t included, but because hypnotic psychotherapies can add important elements to a fuller understanding of resistant ambivalence.

A hypnotherapeutic emphasis on the wisdom of the unconscious mind, for instance, can often provide a means for clients to understand change in new ways, and for ambivalent conflicts to give way to a sense of a powerful inner force. Furthermore, for many teachers of
clinical hypnosis, what has traditionally been called client “resistance” in psychotherapy can equally be viewed as a lack of clinical skill. This view encourages therapists to take responsibility for the resistance, and to search for new and creative means to help people change.

Another category that is absent are ambivalences of people who might seek out hypnotherapy rather than more conventional psychotherapies. These might include ambivalences about the time, cost, or effectiveness of traditional therapies, or a magical belief in the efficacy of hypnosis. Furthermore, hypnosis is often associated in the public mind with special powers and vulnerabilities. How many times are we asked “you’re not going to make me cluck like a chicken are you?” Exploring this kind of question could have led to a deeper discussion in the book about ambivalences clients may have about the influence and authority of therapists or other health providers.

Nonetheless, by illuminating the central role of ambivalence in the quandaries that bring people to psychotherapy or clinical hypnosis, this book provides an important service. The authors have taken a pervasive and difficult subject, and created important guidelines to help facilitate change.


This appears to be the first book authored by Ursula James and little biographical data are offered in the book other than the title of “Honorary Lecturer” and “Visiting Teaching Fellow.” She does have a website that indicates that she studied English and drama at a university in London but no advanced degrees are indicated. She later attended the London College of Clinical Hypnosis, following which she has been a lecturer in several British medical schools, including Oxford University Medical School and St. George’s Medical School.

At the onset, James suggests that this book can be used as an introduction to the subject of hypnosis and that it provides an overview of the field. She also suggests that experienced practitioners may find it helpful in considering the construction of the hypnosis session. That is because the book has a clinical rather than research-based orientation, and it is aimed at individuals wanting to learn hypnosis for the application of medical interventions.

The Clinical Hypnosis Textbook includes 10 chapters and 3 appendices along with an audio CD on which the author demonstrates an induction and hypnosis session. In her first chapter, James grapples with the question: “what is hypnosis?” She provides a fair overview of issues and acknowledges that a true definition is difficult. Operational definitions are provided, however, that differentiate between “hypnosis” and “clinical hypnosis.” She offers that “hypnosis is a physical and mental state of highly focused concentration”, while “clinical hypnosis incorporates a range of defined and replicable methodology within the hypnotic state” (p. 2). Thus, she uses the term “hypnosis” when referring to the state, “hypnotherapy” when referring to the process, and the term “clinical hypnosis” when referring to therapeutic application or use of a specific protocol (p. 3). She continues to describe the advantages of using hypnosis in the clinical setting and offers an explanation for how clinical hypnosis works.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to self-hypnosis and outlines some differences between self- and hetero- hypnosis. The author suggests that self-hypnosis is best learned while in
a hypnotic state to ensure both cognitive and physical learning before the individual practices on their own. Numerous benefits from the use of self-hypnosis are discussed and a script for using it with patients is offered. The accompanying audio CD provides a recording of this script.

The foundation of the author’s approach to the use of hypnosis can be found in chapter’s 3 and 7. Chapter 3 is entitled, “The Structure of the Clinical Hypnosis Session”, while chapter 7 is entitled, “Creating the Hypnotherapeutic Protocol.” These chapters are clearly designed for new practitioners and provide a proposed path for thinking about and planning a hypnosis session. The author suggests six stages to a hypnotic session which include an introduction, an induction, deepening, posthypnotic suggestions, awakening, posthypnosis feedback and debriefing, and a discussion of each of these stages is provided. Applying these stages, Chapter 7 provides a step-by-step guide for conducting a therapeutic session including assessment, rapport and preparation.

Chapter 4 provides a very useful overview of some of the common questions asked by patients and the author suggests potential responses to these questions. While entire books have been written on this topic alone, the most common questions are addressed and reasonable responses presented by the author.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide numerous definitions of hypnosis-related terms (somnambulism, abreacts, etc.) and an overview of several hypnotherapeutic approaches (Ericksonian, Traditional, NLP). Also included is a review of terms such as glove anesthesia, lucid dreaming, regression, and ideo-motor techniques. All of these are very briefly described and probably intended to provide a first exposure of new terms to the beginning student. The book’s final three chapters offer suggested protocols for smoking cessation, phobias, and performance anxiety. In addition, Appendix 1 offers a very brief history of hypnosis; Appendix 2 provides a glossary of terms, while Appendix 3 offers a number of websites related to hypnosis.

In summary, this book successfully completes its goal of providing a brief introductory overview for the beginning student in hypnosis. While other texts have offered far more depth and detail than is contained in this volume, this book probably fits much better than others in the context in which the author has written it. That is, the author’s primary audience appears to be medical school settings where time limits are extreme and the need for concise, practical information is mandatory. The author has produced a useful adjunct for teaching in that setting. The book is not presented as a self-help book to teach lay hypnotists how to treat medical conditions and should not be used as such, nor will it replace the role of well taught beginning, intermediate and advanced hypnosis training and workshops. It is, however, a welcome addition to the materials available for hypnosis education.


Writing a history of psychology is a formidable task. How to frame such a gargantuan, epoch-transcending topic? Should the writer take the long view, and begin with the Classical Greeks? Or take the short view, and write a history of the institutionalization of the field only, picking up the story in the late 1870s? Either route, there are rewards for those who successfully write a history of psychology text. Since nearly all BA programs and many graduate programs in psychology in the US require such a course, the best books are guaranteed an automatic readership.

This is where Cherie G. O’Boyle’s new text, *History of Psychology: A Cultural Perspective*, comes in. O’Boyle, professor of psychology at California State University, San
Marcos, has written an undergraduate text that takes the ambitious long view, with separate chapters for the Classical Greeks, Medieval Era thinkers, proceeding through the scientific revolution, advances in physiology, and so on. Think of all the historic, scientific, and philosophical literature the author of her approach must distill into manageable chapters! As is typical among the “long view” texts, O’Boyle’s narrative improves when she reaches the 20th century due to the fact that the field institutionalizes, creating clearer boundaries for professional psychological discourse. Since O’Boyle is an academic psychologist — true for most of the authors of these texts — she moves onto familiar territory in the 20th century, breeding a stronger narrative and a richer reference base.

*History of Psychology: A Cultural Perspective* is offered at a time when advances in the historiography of psychology have opened up new horizons to psychology’s story of itself. Up until a couple of decades ago, most history of psychology textbooks employed a “presentist” orientation, wherein the past’s intellectual discoveries are lined up in such a way that they seem to “anticipate” current psychology. Past works deemed key to current theories and findings are centrally positioned within such a narrative, while other developments are marginalized (and sometimes ignored altogether). History, unfortunately, does not operate in such an insular and sanitary way.

Enter the “new” history of psychology, to counter this “old” history. Initiated in a landmark 1989 article by Laurel Furomoto, the new history challenges this “presentist” framework with an historicism that recognizes the complex positioning of psychological inquiry within a cultural period. In the new historicism, the present state of the field is not the baseline for evaluating history’s offerings. Rather, inquiries about mind and behavior initiated by history’s investigators are framed by a given era’s prevailing ideologies, methods, tools, and resources. To achieve these ends, the new historicists expand the literatures of analysis to include letters and diaries. They engage in the “close reading” of texts, to discern underlying motives and assumptions driving psychological inquiry. They study the popular press to understand the application and positioning of psychology within the broader culture. And they embrace the literature of marginalized groups and figures — women, people of color, and non-westerners — to gather insights into how the exercise of power and positioning within the social hierarchy informs the character of psychological inquiry. The result is subversive, in that the Enlightenment-originating meta-narrative wherein the “march of science” is portrayed as a rationalistic project progressively subsuming the unknown within ever-more understandable rubrics of knowledge is undermined. A more contextualized history emerges, wherein scientific breakthroughs are framed within an intricate weave of evolving perspectives, philosophical discourse and cultural dynamics.

Mesmerism and hypnotism have fared well in the new history, recognized anew for their contributions to the development of the field. Yet the new historicism also documents psychology’s complicity in perpetuating racism, classicism, and ethnocentrism. For all its claims to epistemological exceptionalism, even science is captive to the throbs and throes of cultural currents.

O’Boyle’s *History of Psychology* recognizes the new historicism in several ways. Developments in the field are contextualized by placing them within their cultural milieu, and insets are provided describing changes to the public and personal sphere, such as military conflicts, technological advances, and alterations to daily life. The author also attempts to incorporate a feminist perspective into the story, another welcome addition. Although less contingent upon the new historicism, O’Boyle avoids the “great man” approach to psychology’s history. Instead, she focuses on the development of ideas, with recurring
explorations of how the epistemology of psychological questions has changed over time.

In other ways, *History of Psychology: A Cultural Perspective* fails to embrace the new historicism. The first chapter, entitled, “Origins of Psychological Thought: Why Do Other People Have Such Bizarre Beliefs and Behave So Strangely?” stands out in this regard. O’Boyle ambitiously attempts to describe “universal psychological characteristics” that delineates how people (everywhere and through all of time) think and perceive their worlds. Admirers of *The Skeptical Inquirer*’s Michael Shermer will find much to like in this material. This reviewer found it problematic. Claiming that all “humanity” practices limiting “perceptual and cognitive mechanisms” such as selective recall and the confirmation bias may be true, but we must acknowledge that universal confirmation on these matters has not been accomplished. That they result in “bizarre” and “strange” beliefs, as O’Boyle contends, smacks of unexamined, unscientific assumptions. Given the vitality of feminist, post modern, and post colonial critiques revealing the Euro-American-centricity of a great many efforts to characterize “all of humanity,” O’Boyle’s attempt at a high-end authoritative description of the limitations of “other people’s beliefs” rings hollow. The alleged purity of western psychology’s notions of objectivity essential for such claims is bound by historical epoch, geographic region, class, and ethnicity. Without a critical analysis of the assumptions that underlie her reasoning, O’Boyle’s “universals” are in danger of epistemological imperialism.

In another section of this chapter, O’Boyle describes what she calls “Ways of Coming to Believe.” She lists three: trust, reason, and experience, from which she builds a general epistemology that is then re-circulated in later chapters as a vehicle to understand historic changes to this core issue. This is a compelling strategy and works quite well in later chapters, but suffers from an oversimplification here.

According to O’Boyle, not only are most people deeply superstitious, but beliefs in the supernatural emerge from an attendant state of ignorance, which in turn create constraining circularities of thinking. This approach is too narrowly prescribed; the strategy begs enumeration to add depth, breadth and validity. *History of Psychology: A Cultural Perspective* does not offer one. Moreover, it ignores the epistemologically provocative notion of “revealed knowledge.” In a possible disclosure of her personal views of the supernatural, O’Boyle draws on Tylor’s (1924) [sic] notion of “primitive religion” which places animism at the lowest rank in a hierarchy of religions. In the late 1970s, anthropology and sociology cast off the use of the term “primitive” deeming it rife with ethnocentric attitudes of superiority. Why is it that psychology still embraces this Victorian-era throwback? The spiritually or religiously inclined look erringly simple-minded in O’Boyle’s epistemology. Since surveys show that well over 80% of Americans believe God is important in their lives, this opening chapter may leave a great many undergraduate readers suspicious of the author’s intentions.

*History of Psychology’s* epistemology has an unearned finality to it. In contrast, the historic record indicates that the field is continually transforming, presupposing a more open-ended epistemology. Popper’s principle of falsifiability endorses a view of science under-revision, as does Kuhn’s paradigmatic approach. In sum, any scholar willing to write a history of psychology deserves recognition for it is a most formidable task. Cherie O’Boyle takes some real chances with her *History of Psychology*. There is much to admire here. Fortunately, psychology textbooks tend to be works-in-progress, with new editions under development as soon as the current edition is completed. Hopefully, in the next edition, the author will include thoughtful critiques of the assumptions underlying her views on the acquisition and creation of knowledge.
References
