

## Scrupulously fair-minded

Buchanan's book provides a remarkably accurate and comprehensive account of my father Hans Eysenck's life and research; indeed, it is definitive. What is especially impressive is his success in evoking the flavour of the long-distant past in British psychology. Unlike most other critics, Buchanan is scrupulously fair-minded in his assessments of my father's research. As a historian, he is understandably less concerned with the strengths and the limitations of that research than research psychologists.

The most important research strength of my father that receives relatively little attention concerns the controversy as to whether we should think of personality as consisting of numerous correlated personality traits or as a much smaller number of orthogonal personality dimensions. The former view was easily the more popular until about 20–30 years ago. However, the latter view (espoused by my father) was eventually shown to be clearly preferable and now dominates the field. Almost uniquely in psychology, my father's proposed three-factor descriptive model of personality remains largely accepted 60 years after it was first proposed.

Another strength not focused on by Buchanan was the importance my father attached to the heritability of personality traits, which led to several twin studies. It was commonly assumed (especially in North America under behaviourism) that individual differences in personality were entirely determined by environmental factors. There is now irrefutable evidence that genetic factors are important. My father also assumed there is continuity between normality and abnormality and that a dimensional approach to abnormality is preferable to a categorical approach. Both assumptions are accepted far more now than when my father endorsed them several decades ago.

What were the limitations of my father's research? The most obvious one is that he frequently espoused controversial viewpoints (typically supported by in-house research) that have totally failed to stand the test of time. Here are a few examples: criminality is associated with extraversion; personality strongly determines longevity; smoking is a very minor risk factor for disease; extra-sensory perception exists; certain star signs are associated with sporting achievement; EEG measures correlate very highly with IQ;

psychoanalysis reduces the chances of recovery from neurosis. No other prominent psychologist has been so wrong so often. Surprisingly, there was sometimes compelling evidence that his views were wrong at the time he expressed them. For example, I doubt whether sufferers from Buerger's disease would agree with his view, expressed in a 1991 book, that smoking isn't addictive – these patients have partial limb operations because of gangrene caused by smoking. In many cases, this doesn't deter them from continuing to smoke and having more and more of their limbs amputated.

Buchanan refers to the numerous methodological shortcomings in my father's research. Sometimes these were more extreme than implied by Buchanan. Good questionnaire items are short and unambiguous, but here is an 84-word one from a questionnaire devised with Grossarth-Maticek:

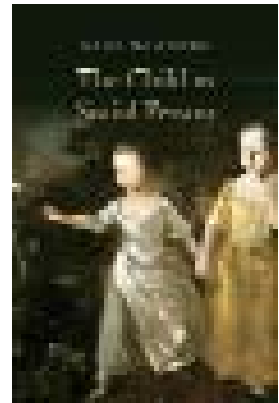
Do you change your behaviour according to consequences of previous behaviour, i.e., do you repeat ways of acting which have in the past led to positive results, such as contentment, well-being, self-reliance, etc., and to stop acting in ways which lead to negative consequences, i.e., to feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, depression, excitement, annoyance, etc.? In other words, have you learned to give up ways of acting which have negative consequences, and to rely more and more on ways of acting which have positive consequences?

As Buchanan points out, my father built his approach to individual differences on the solid foundations of several giants associated with UCL such as Galton, Spearman and Burt. He developed a superb descriptive model of personality that has scarcely been bettered and contributed numerous ingenious theoretical insights. However, he took his eye off the ball by trying to exceed the fame (and citations!) of Sigmund Freud with comparably grandiose speculations. If only my father had focused his research more on behavioural genetics rather than wasting his time tilting at an endless succession of windmills!

| Oxford University Press; 2010; Hb £34.95

Reviewed by Michael Eysenck

who is Professor of Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London



### A novel approach

The Child as Social Person  
Sara Meadows

Sara Meadows' ambitious book is a counterpart to *The Child as Thinker*, her earlier account of cognitive development. Her guide is Uri Bronfenbrenner's theory 'that children and environments have to be seen as mutually-shaping systems, each changing over time, each reacting to changes in the other'.

Meadows navigates a vast research literature in her exploration of these systems around the developing child. Her approach is comprehensive, building up a picture of each system from biological, evolutionary and genetic foundations, towards psychological and sociocultural perspectives.

Rather like Bronfenbrenner's model itself, Meadows' style aims to highlight overlaps and linkages. To this end, the text is heavily cross-referenced. For example, where Meadows argues that mastery experiences serve a range of developmental goals for the individual child (e.g. a sense of agency and self-regulation abilities), the reader is referred to later discussions of this theme at other levels of the ecosystemic model, such as parent-child dyads and educational discourse.

In her introduction, Meadows likens the book to a Victorian novel. Suspense aside, the comparison is apt for this rich, rangy story of development.

| Routledge; 2010; Pb £24.95

Reviewed by Joe Hickey who is with the Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust



### Up to date and inclusive

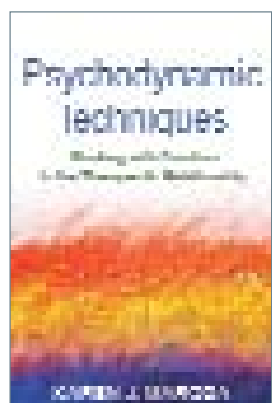
The Student's Guide to Cognitive Neuroscience (2nd edn)  
Jamie Ward

*The Student's Guide to Cognitive Neuroscience* is not just for students. This new edition of Jamie Ward's best-selling textbook, is a clear and informative read. Within the text all the chapters have been restructured with up-to-date references, making this book an essential purchase for someone looking for an all-inclusive overview of cognitive neuroscience. This second edition contains two new chapters 'The Developing Brain' and 'The Hearing Brain' and is now in full colour, making it more vibrant. Each chapter presents an overview of the latest theories and findings, exploring areas such as seeing, acting and remembering, and is finished off nicely with a easy-to-read summary of the main points, example essay questions and references for further reading.

This book is a helpful resource for all, providing comprehensive resources online, such as chapter-by-chapter slide shows, and lecture-planning advice. The e-learning platform enables instructors to teach directly using this book, making it useful to students, tutors or those who just wish to read up on this area.

Psychology Press; 2010;  
Pb £29.95

Reviewed by **Samantha L. Heaton** who is an assistant psychologist at Rampton Hospital



### Emotions in therapy

Psychodynamic Techniques: Working with Emotion in the Therapeutic Relationship  
Karen J. Maroda

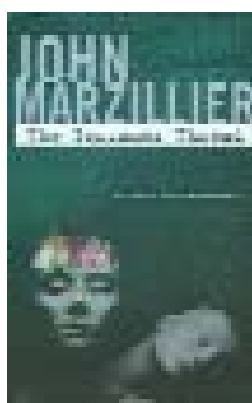
This book provides a technical guide on the use of both therapists' and clients' emotional experiences as a therapeutic intervention. Moving away from the traditional client-focused approach, Maroda advocates that the therapist's emotional responses are crucial to the development of the therapeutic relationship.

The book contains a wealth of practical suggestions for managing emotional interactions with clients, distinguishing between therapeutic and non-therapeutic ways to work with emotion. The shared hopes, fears and expectations of therapist and client are initially discussed, progressing on to the more complex emotional experiences encountered in the developing therapeutic relationship.

The author interweaves her own case study experiences into each chapter and explores rarely addressed topics, including identifying and managing regression, implementing self-disclosure and using conflict effectively.

This book is a fascinating and valuable resource for new and established therapists. By exploring and applying the guidelines Maroda offers, therapists can create a body of useful psychodynamic techniques for effective therapy.

Guilford Press; 2010; Hb £24.00  
Reviewed by **Kate Sparks** who is a Chartered Psychologist in Health



### Fascinating and honest

The Gossamer Thread: My Life as a Psychotherapist  
John Marzillier

John Marzillier, recently an outspoken critic of IAPT, has been a significant shaper of the profession of clinical psychology. This is certainly the book I wish I had read before I embarked on my clinical training, as his elegant prose effortlessly steers us through a fascinating array of client material to illustrate the theoretical shifts he has made from the naive simplicity of behavioural therapy, through the utility of CBT, then a training in psychodynamic psychotherapy, to an integrated approach. And along the way we meet the pantheon of our professional forebears: Hans Eysenck, Dorothy Rowe, a tennis match with Aaron Beck, and a pivotal encounter with Anthony Storr.

However, keeping his eye on evolving theoretical perspectives in one-to-one work means that Marzillier does not capture the day-to-day hiccups that beset the life of a clinician. As a result he omits the systemic insights

that can be so valuable to working in the NHS. For example, he mentions political wranglings that temporarily closed down the Oxford course, without attempting an understanding of what might have been going on in terms of the unconscious of the institution.

Despite a chapter on the unsatisfactory experience of his own psychotherapy, and the searingly honest report of his work with a flirtatious patient who eventually commits suicide, what is missing from this memoir, are the other, much stronger threads that tug at us. Marzillier glosses over his own significant life events – divorce, fatherhood, his relationship with his parents – in a few sentences. If these have influenced him as a practitioner, perhaps he will incorporate them as he embarks on his new chosen path as a writer?

Karnac Books; 2010; Pb £19.99  
Reviewed by **Jenny Doe** who is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist with South Essex Partnership Trust

just in

Sample titles just in:

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**Gifted Lives** Joan Freeman

**Public Speaking for Psychologists** David B. Feldman & Paul J. Silva

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