

empathy difficulties such as psychopathy, schizophrenia, autism and brain injury. However, there is the novel inclusion of a chapter on depression as a disorder of empathy 'turned on the self' leading to excessive self-blame and guilt about distress caused to others (O'Connor *et al.*). The chapter by Chris Gillberg was also particularly persuasive with regard to the concept of a normal distribution of empathic abilities, with disorders falling at the extreme ends. This issue of a continuum is sometimes lost in empathy research where a 'can he/can't he empathize' dichotomy is often adopted.

Part II provides a slightly more eclectic range of chapters construed to address empathy and related concepts in health, including neuroimaging, neurophysiology and genetics. There is a fascinating chapter on 'empathogenic agents' which proposes that ecstasy is an empathy-inducing substance (Velea and Hautefeuille) and suggests a potential neurochemical basis for empathy with reference to mirror neurons, through an increase in imitative behaviour which facilitates social integration. This middle section of the book also covers the bigger picture of empathy including its early development of empathy in infants (Diego and Aaron Jones) and the evolution of empathy (Harris), both important pieces in the jigsaw for understanding potential empathic disturbances. In addition the role of motivation and other softer 'psychological' concepts are included in this section, and helpfully complement the neuroscience literature. It seems intuitive that there are multiple external factors contributing to empathy, which are often overlooked with a more reductionist approach.

The final and shortest section of the book covers models, regulation and measurement of empathy. There are a range of original ideas presented including the 'empathy expense account' and the disadvantages of 'over-empathizing' (Hodges and Biswas-Diener). Several models are provided including a chapter updating the perception-action model of empathy by Preston and de Waal. The Shared Manifold Hypothesis (Gallese) focuses on the concept of simulation and attempts to explain how schizophrenia and autism arise through 'defective intentional attunement'. The final chapter is the only chapter dedicated to application of knowledge about empathy and proposes that empathy could be trained in medical students by using approaches from the arts. This seems to bring the book full circle back to the issue of understanding empathy disorders in psychiatry and serves as a reminder that furthering our knowledge of these difficulties should ultimately improve care and appropriate interventions. In summary, this book is an excellent addition to the literature on social

cognition – an ambitious attempt to draw together the multiple branches of empathy research seems to have been met with success.

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*Pediatric Neuropsychological Intervention*. Edited by S. J. Hunter and J. Donders. (Pp. 496; £60; ISBN-13: 9780521875509 hb.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK. 2007.

Whilst textbooks covering adult neuropsychology have been common, up until the last decade texts dedicated solely to paediatric neuropsychology have not. As Hunter and Donders point out, the recent proliferation reflects growing enthusiasm in the area and its development into a field in its own right. The uniqueness of this text is its focus upon intervention, rather than assessment in paediatric neuropsychology. However, as will be evident to many, separating assessment and intervention is difficult, with assessment often acting as intervention in itself. Therefore, at several points in the book, the emphasis on assessment is stronger than may be expected given the title.

The book is a collection of 22 concise chapters written by a range of contributors from North America. The book begins with a brief introductory chapter, in which it is stated that the authors have 'sought recent and accumulating information to support the field's goals of defining the best means for remediating, supporting, and accommodating children and adolescents with developmental and neurocognitive difficulties' (p. 4). The introduction is followed by chapters covering issues fundamental to paediatric neuropsychology including taking a developmental approach, research, empirical aspects, multicultural aspects and use within the educational system. Whilst the majority of the book would be of international interest, this final chapter of the first section specifically relates to the educational system in North America.

The subsequent section is made up of several chapters, covering a number of congenital or acquired neuropsychological disorders of childhood. A major strength of the book is the broad range of conditions covered, with a chapter dedicated to each of the following: traumatic brain injury, cancer, seizure disorders, autism spectrum disorders, right hemisphere disorders, genetic syndromes associated with intellectual disability, specific learning disabilities, attentional

disorders, dysexecutive disorders, movement disorders and disorders of motor control and coordination. Each chapter typically begins with a summary of the biological basis, together with information about diagnosis, clinical presentation, neuropsychological findings and treatment approaches. There is some inconsistency in the focus of the chapters, with some not straying far from the discussion of assessment, some discussing just those interventions specific to the neurocognitive deficit and others including a broad discussion of interventions including treatments for secondary difficulties associated with the specific disorder. However, where discussions of interventions are lacking, this is often not due to omission, but instead reflects the paucity of research in the area.

The third, somewhat eclectic, section covers a broader discussion of interventions with chapters covering pharmacological interventions, quantitative electroencephalography and neurofeedback, neuroimaging, cognitive rehabilitation and neuropsychological rehabilitation of school-age children. This section adds yet greater breadth to the book and offers an interesting glimpse into future directions for the field. The book is finished off nicely by a single chapter in the final section that summarizes the preceding chapters and attempts to highlight

'the take home lessons'. What is evident from the book is that paediatric neuropsychology remains a newly developing area, but despite limitations in the available research literature, significant advances in the area and growing interest indicate much promise for the future of the field.

The style of the book is largely academic and whilst the focus on the research literature is a strength, I felt that it often failed to make the bridge to everyday clinical practice. A reader new to the area may have finished the book not having a sense of what happens in practice and I feel the book would have benefited from more case vignettes and examples to bring the discussion to life. However, this was not necessarily a goal of the book and instead the focus on the up-to-date evidence in the area was a strong point.

Overall, the book should appeal to a wide audience, providing a concise review across a broad range of neuropsychological disorders and related issues. By summarizing the latest evidence and frequent discussion of 'future directions' the book provides an interesting picture of the current state of paediatric neuropsychology.

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