

A missed opportunity

There has been a steady growth in the number of books exploring what psychology has to say about terrorism in the past six years; Ron Roberts's edited collection is not a typical example. To begin with, the title is misleading. A more accurate title would have been *Peace Activism, State Terrorism and Psychology*. Anyone hoping to learn about the motivation and psychology of groups such as the IRA, al-Qaeda, and other non-state terrorists will be disappointed. Nor does the book cover

the psychological impact of terrorist attacks and campaigns on victims and wider communities. No satisfaction either for those who want to learn about what role psychology can play in ending non-state terrorism.

By and large, this is an angry political book. It is not a review of psychological knowledge (in all too brief flashes there are some useful discussions on the psychological impact of torture or indeterminate prison sentences). Instead, the book takes aim at what it sees as the evils of state terrorism and alleged conspiracies of power.

Chapter 2 is probably the most obvious example, and here Roberts argues that a conspiracy exists in the British Psychological Society in general, and *The Psychologist* in particular, to censor any criticism of the US-led war on terror. Five pages are devoted to discussing *The Psychologist's* refusal to publish an article written by Roberts in 2004. I don't know what *The Psychologist's* acceptance rate is, but I would be surprised if the numbers rejected were not considerably larger than the numbers published. It is hard not to come away with a sense of sour grapes.

The best chapters are probably those by Ian Robbins and Nimisha Patel. Both cover similar territory and both focus attention on the possible involvement of psychologists in torture. This is an extremely serious issue and one which has also been raised in a recent article in *The Psychologist* (August 2007). The manner in which the American Psychological Association in particular has failed to draw clear lines in this area is a matter of grave concern. It is on this front that this book is at its strongest and most relevant.

Such moments are all too fleeting. Some research findings are presented, but there is often a frustrating lack of detail. Two chapters are essentially just a history of the peace movement in the UK. There is a sense that some chapters may be cast-offs from other projects. For example, chapter 8 is one of Ron Roberts's five chapters, but is written in a style completely unlike his others.

Ultimately, this book is a missed opportunity. I came away convinced there is a profound need for a good book which takes a long, hard, critical look at the role of psychology in countering and managing non-state terrorism. Some tough questions need to be answered. This volume, however, was not up to that task.

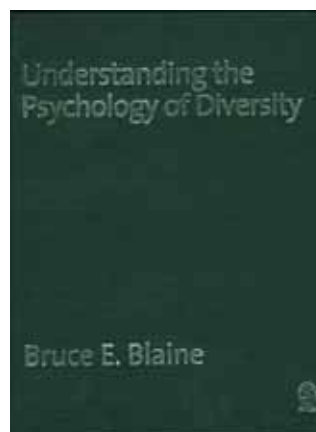
| PCCS Books; 2007; Pb £18.00

Reviewed by Andrew Silke

who is Professor of Criminology at the University of East London



Just War:
Psychology
and Terrorism
Ron Roberts (Ed.)



A useful resource

Understanding the
Psychology of Diversity
Bruce E. Blaine

The author does more than describe dimensions and definitions of difference or provide research studies and data of diversity. He shows that psychology plays a crucial role in 'the presence of difference'. Whether our differences are visible or hidden, 'the diversity of our lives is partly a function of us – our individual ways of thinking and emotional needs'.

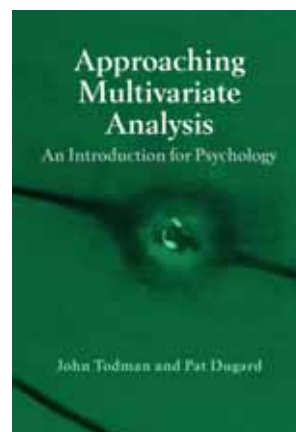
The reader is encouraged to participate with the diversity issues, as questions and problems are presented throughout for discussion and personal reflection.

Whilst the book is written for undergraduate study, it is relevant to all psychology practitioners interested in understanding the presence of, as well as the problems and issues associated with, social and cultural difference in our society. There are times when we project too much social difference onto our contexts and the people in them. At other times, we may underestimate the diversity around us.

This is a useful resource for all psychologists, though some readers may find the US context a little limiting in places. It will help all of us recognise the role we play and the responsibilities we have in helping people perceived, by themselves or others, as different, to cope with social stigma and respond to social inequality.

| Sage; 2007; Hb £65.00

Reviewed by Mohammed S. Bham



Accessible and empowering

Approaching Multivariate
Analysis: An Introduction
for Psychology
John Todman & Pat Dugard

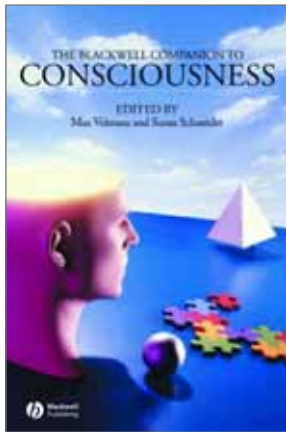
The area of multivariate statistics is not usually one that inspires feelings of confidence in most psychology students. According to the preface of this book, the authors wanted to make difficult-to-grasp ideas accessible and to empower their readers. This book meets both of those aims.

A broad range of topics is covered; from the useful recap of basic ideas and terminology to more advanced statistical analyses. The writing style is clear, and does not assume higher mathematical knowledge. The authors use example data sets to demonstrate how to use SPSS in most of the analyses covered, along with explanations for the outputs and graphs. Each chapter includes a further reading list and also a short section suggesting suitable ways of writing up results of that particular analysis for journal articles.

I would particularly recommend this text to postgraduate students, but also to anyone who is looking for a way into understanding multivariate statistics.

| Psychology Press; 2007;
Hb £49.95

Reviewed by Alice Jones



Timely and impressive

The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness
Max Velmans & Susan Schneider (Eds.)

One of the features of the past 10–15 years has been a veritable explosion of interest in the topic of consciousness. More importantly, there has been a change in the nature of that interest with a huge increase in impressive experimental research. A major part of that is attributable to the inexorable rise of neuroscientific approaches to consciousness involving extensive use of neuroimaging. As a result of all these developments, the appearance of this large edited book on consciousness is very timely.

How successful have Velmans and Schneider been in their attempt to distil the essence of this cornucopia of research into the pages of their book? In my opinion, they have been notably successful. Virtually all of the leading researchers in this area have contributed chapters, and those chapters provide up-to-date accounts of their current research and theorising. What is especially impressive is the range of views represented. Philosophers jostle with neuroscientists, biologists, psychologists and others in the pages of this book, and all perspectives are given a respectful hearing.

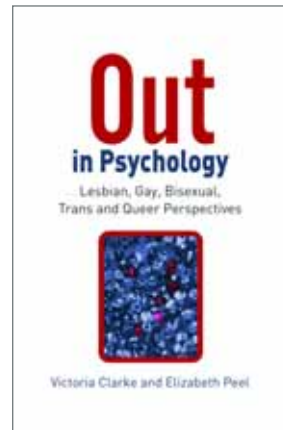
What are the limitations of this splendid book? First, there is general agreement that consciousness is an especially difficult topic for research, and controversy exists with regard to almost all its aspects. Given that

situation, it would have been highly desirable to have some general chapters designed to integrate the material within each major section. As it is, the reader (especially one not entirely *au fait* with research in this area) may find that it is difficult to make coherent sense of the fragmented chapters.

Second, the name index is disappointingly incomplete. For example, I find Wegner's research on consciousness very interesting, and wanted to see what was said about it in the book. According to the name index, there is nothing at all about his research in the entire book. However, I subsequently discovered that there are a number of references to his work! It would have saved me a fair amount of time if the pages on which Wegner's research is cited had been indicated in the name index.

In sum, this is an outstanding book that anyone seriously interested in consciousness really needs to read and absorb. My one major caveat is that the non-expert reader might be well advised to read a general overview of the area beforehand.

Blackwell; 2007; Pb £24.99
Reviewed by Michael W. Eysenck



Addressing imbalance

Out in Psychology: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Perspectives
Victoria Clarke & Elizabeth Peel (Eds.)

A discipline long criticised for being solely the study of white, middle-class, able-bodied, urban-dwelling heterosexual male psychology students in the US, psychology has made some headway in reaching out to other sections of society. However, in the study of sexual minority groups, research has still been limited, tending to focus upon white, middle-class, able-bodied, urban-dwelling gay men!

Many of the chapters here question whether this historic focus on gay male (and, to a lesser extent, lesbian) psychology has served to further marginalise other sexual minority groups, perhaps rendering invisible the unique experiences and psychologies of bisexual or transgendered individuals. It seeks to add the BTQ to L&G psychology and, in doing so, address the power imbalance that can arise from both academic and societal ignorance of these populations. An excellent chapter by Clarke and Peel also examines tensions between L, G, B & T populations and questions whether they

should be treated as a harmonious community for the purposes of research or clinical practice. They are often more different than they are similar and a historical alliance between them for recognition and equality should not be taken as reason enough to consider them a collective LGBT psychology.

Divided into four parts – Histories and commentaries, Lives and experiences, Work and leisure, and Health and practice – *Out in Psychology* dares to consider that there is more to life for sexual minorities than Homo-, bi- or trans-phobia. LGBT individuals still work, play, fall in love and fall ill. Chapters examining career success, sporting prowess, and alcohol consumption encourage the reader to see beyond sexual orientation as the only issue of importance in their lives.

Most chapters are very accessible and provide an overview of queer/sexuality theory that is engaging and insightful, all too often not the case with other publications of this sort. A superb introduction to many perspectives long ignored by psychologists, and a must read for anyone working with LGBT populations.

Wiley; 2007; Hb £105.00
Reviewed by Adam Bourne

just in

The Psychology of Risk Breakwell, G.M.
Introducing Psychological Research Banyard, P. & Grayson, A.
Football 'Hooliganism', Policing and the War on the 'English Disease' Stott, C. & Pearson, G.
Mad, Bad and Sad: A History of Women Doctors from the 1800 to the Present Appignanesi, L.
Pure Sport: Practical Sport Psychology Kremer, J. & Moran, A.

Motivational Interviewing in the Treatment of Psychological Problems Arkowitz, H. (Ed).
Appraisal, feedback and development Fletcher, C.

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