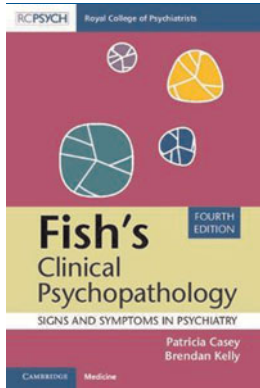


Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge and Femi Oyeboode



Fish's Clinical Psychopathology: Signs and Symptoms in Psychiatry

(4th edn) by Patricia Casey and Brendan Kelly Royal College of Psychiatrists/Cambridge University Press. 2019. £24.99 (Pb). 146 pp. ISBN: 9781108456340


Fish's Clinical Psychopathology is one of the important texts in psychopathology; now in its fourth edition, I had the advantage of reading the original text written by Fish, published in 1967 that was given to me by one of my consultants in my early training. I was pleasantly surprised by the new edition as the philosophical aspects of psychopathology have been updated, using the works of Kendell, Kendler, Sass and Parnas. The discussion regarding classification of psychiatric disorders includes the latest versions of the classification manuals. Another positive aspect is the inclusion of issues such as validity, reliability and utility, comorbidity, and describing monothetic and polythetic approaches.

The structure of the book broadly follows the structure of the original *Fish's Clinical Psychopathology*. After a discussion about psychopathology and classification there are chapters on disorders of perception, thought and speech, memory, emotion, experience of self and motor disorders. There are additional chapters on disorders of consciousness and personality disorders. The book chapters go into some detail of psychopathological phenomena.

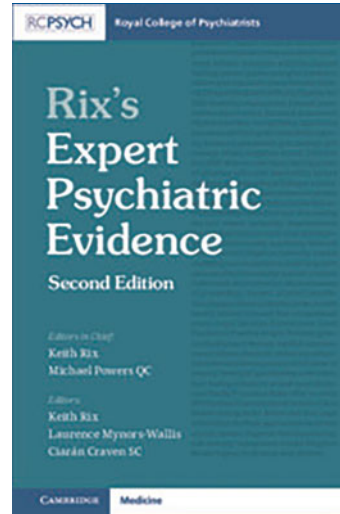
The strength of book is when it discusses disorders of perception, thought, emotion and self. I have found some neuropsychiatry texts more informative when it comes to disorders of memory.

The original *Fish's Clinical Psychopathology* was less than 130 pages, which was a testament to Frank Fish's ability to convey a significant amount of knowledge in that small volume. Casey & Kelly have managed to keep the book under 150 pages. It is understandable that given the size there will be some limitations, consequently, the book is thin on philosophy.

This book provides an excellent introduction to the field of psychopathology, which has expanded dramatically, and psychiatrists should be encouraged to delve deeper into the field. Psychopathology is a method that enables us to identify symptoms and signs, and distinguish them from one another, and is integral to diagnostic process. As a starting point in studying psychopathology the new edition of *Fish's Clinical Psychopathology* is a valuable resource.

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Rix's Expert Psychiatric Evidence

(2nd edn) Edited by Keith Rix, Laurence Mynors-Wallis and Ciaran Craven Royal College of Psychiatrists/Cambridge University Press. 2020. £49.99 (pb). 438 pp. ISBN: 9781911623687

When embarking on the journey towards qualification in medical school doctors must learn the new language of medicine. Consisting of esoteric vocabulary and complex phrases, this medical lingua franca facilitates communication between doctors and helps define membership of the profession. More than simply a way of describing, it reflects a new way of thinking that underpins the medical model.

As we progress through our careers many doctors, perhaps especially psychiatrists, will encounter the unfamiliar world of the law in the capacity of an expert witness. This new landscape has its own quite distinct idioms and norms. *Rix's Expert Psychiatric Evidence* offers a helping hand to guide both the novice and more experienced doctor through the often-challenging interface between medicine and the law.

The second edition brings in the expertise of several additional editors and contributors with substantial medical and legal experience. It also integrates information on different jurisdictions across the British Isles throughout the text, abandoning the previously separate chapter on those areas beyond England and Wales. Taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the digital age there is now an extensive online version, including invaluable templates that can be downloaded and adapted by the reader.

Chapters cover a wide range of legal topics, dealing with issues such as the role of the expert witness, the types of courts and cases likely to be encountered, and advice for doctors giving evidence in person. Topics include criminal proceedings, personal injury, capacity issues, employment cases and Coroners courts. Many practical issues that may baffle inexperienced medical professionals are also considered in detail, such as how to negotiate instruction from legal counsel, arranging the consultation itself and structuring the resultant report.

The whole volume is presented in an accessible, but erudite style, shot through with tongue-in-cheek humour – 'The best way to get paid is to be an expert in Ireland'. The chapters are complemented with a wide range of useful appendices, including specimen reports, and online, a host of practical tools, such as consent forms, appointment letters and time sheets. There are even tables of details like cases, statutes and practice directions, for easy reference.

Overall *Rix's Expert Psychiatric Evidence* offers an excellent practical guidebook to doctors navigating the often alien waters of the legal realm.

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