

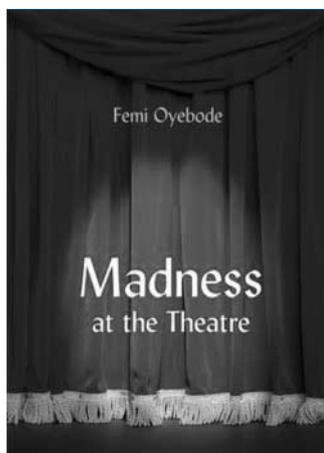
conventions and declarations. It plays a vital role in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights from the 1940s, where the very first sentence of Article 1 reads 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and human rights'. Interestingly, although acknowledged as a concept underpinning the European Convention on Human Rights, dignity is not actually mentioned within it. Despite this, Professor Rosen acknowledges that some authors feel that dignity is a useless or even redundant concept and one subsumed by autonomy.

There are plenty of controversial and thought-provoking passages, such as when considering the issue of suicide, including the permissibility of suicide and the right of a person to end their own life, and discussion on the right of an individual to choose to behave in an undignified way as a corollary to the State's positive duty of having to protect 'the dignity of the human person'.

Human rights can be a nebulous concept for many – people invariably know they have them but most are unsure as to what they are, or how they affect reality. The author finds this situation 'deeply puzzling'. Although not clinically based, this is a very readable book. Philosophy novices such as myself, those interested in human rights issues, or the intellectually curious will find this book of interest. By the end the reader will have a more in-depth understanding of dignity as a rank or status, as an inherent value unique to humans, a behaviour or character that is dignified, or the idea that people should be treated with dignity and accorded respect.

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Madness at the Theatre

By Femi Oyeode.
RCPsych Publications. 2012.
£15.00 (pb). 112 pp.
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This book's aim is clear: an exploration of the dramatic representations of madness in theatre. The preface highlights how both psychiatrists and dramatists are concerned with delineating extreme mental states. Throughout his journey from ancient Greek theatre to the contemporary work of Sarah Kane and Wole Soyinka, Oyeode locates examples of descriptive psychopathology. Readers will experience Shakespearean delusional jealousy in *The Winter's Tale*, induced jealousy in *Othello*, melancholia and factitious madness in *Hamlet* and disintegrative madness in *King Lear*. Oyeode explores how Ibsen exposed his characters' inner worlds, pre-dating Freud's concern with how the past affects us. Problematic family relationships, suicide and Côtard's syndrome are available for study in Ibsen's dramatisations.

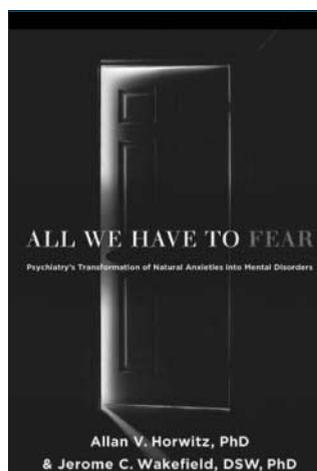
Ancient Greek theatre receives considerable attention. Of particular interest is the discussion of *Oedipus Rex*. Oyeode

argues that this ancient play challenges our contemporary 'assumed association between self-knowledge and personal growth'. It is Oedipus' quest for self-discovery (his unwitting incest and murder of a blood relative) which leads to tragedy. The book reaches its zenith when presenting uncomfortable dilemmas, made relevant to current-day psychiatry. This questioning of certainties finds greatest expression in chapter 7, through Harold Pinter's exposition of the 'quicksand that is reality'. Oyeode suggests that the encounters between this playwright's characters have parallels with those between psychiatrists and patients in a post-modern world: 'What is expected of both parties is ambiguous . . . can be experienced as threatening and potentially treacherous'. The point is reiterated by Kane's dramatic work, *4:48 Psychosis*, in which she bares her own mental anguish and her relationships with psychiatrists. In contrast to this focus on mental states of individuals, Soyinka's African plays are concerned with degenerating human society. Oyeode argues that Soyinka's plays evoke the brutality and corrupt leadership in parts of contemporary Africa, equivalent to a mad world.

Madness at the theatre has widespread appeal. The particular relevance of theatre to psychiatrists is best described by Tennessee Williams' Blanche DuBois as she addresses the courteous doctor who is taking her to the asylum: 'Whoever you are – I have always depended on the kindness of strangers'.

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All We Have to Fear: Psychiatry's Transformation of Natural Anxieties into Mental Disorders

By Allan V. Horwitz
& Jerome C. Wakefield.
Oxford University Press. 2012.
£18.99 (hb). 288 pp.
ISBN: 9780199793754

How do we account for the apparently inexorable rise in the prevalence of anxiety disorders in the Western world? What part are psychiatrists playing in this process? And who stands to benefit from it?

The authors propose that our current ways of classifying anxiety disorders are responsible. Although clinicians tend only to see people with problems, research instruments can lead us to define, as diseases, states that should be viewed as 'normal' anxiety. Hence the apparent increase of these states and the potential bonanza for Big Pharma. Evolutionary psychology is proposed as the prism to achieve the clarity we currently lack.

This is a well-written critique of different ways of classifying anxiety disorders. I particularly liked the historical review of thinking about anxiety, spanning classical authors, the age of neurasthenia and Freud. The authors write, of course, in the shadow of the American health system, with its coupling of