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## BOOK REVIEW

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# Susan Bailey & Mairead Dolan (eds): Adolescent forensic psychiatry

Arnold, London, 2004, ISBN 0-340-76389-2

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Mental illness among young offenders is an important topic in criminal justice and forensic psychiatry: adolescence is a period of peak crime rates, about 50% of all offenders are under the age of 21, and many of them are suffering from some type of psychiatric disorder. On the other hand, good and comprehensive textbooks of adolescent forensic psychiatry are very rare. This book fulfils both criteria. *Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry* discusses a broad range of issues. The key influences which shape young people's attitudes and behaviour and the association between different offending patterns and psychiatric disorders are at the centre of interest.

More than 40 expert writers—mainly from educational, social, legal and mental health institutions in the United Kingdom—cover a wide range of disciplines and specialties for nearly every important aspect of adolescent forensic psychiatry. There are chapters on assessment in adolescent forensic mental health services; forensic behaviours, neurobiology and genetics of aggression and childhood antecedents; linking disorders to forensic behaviours; offending behaviours and victims as perpetrators; assessment and

management of risk; sexually abusive behaviour by children and adolescents; arson and property offending; treatment approaches including cognitive behavioural therapies, psychodynamic therapies, arts therapies and physical treatments; delivery of services and national and international legal frameworks.

The authors have written their contributions from their own perspectives, and there is some overlap between chapters, but the variety of contributors reflect the different approaches which can be observed in the child and adolescent forensic system, and not only in the United Kingdom.

This book is a real landmark and is not limited to English-speaking adolescent forensic psychiatry, because most of the authors made their contributions taking into consideration the current international literature. It will be of special interest to all people working with children and adolescents, not only in a legal context but also within educational, social and general mental health services. I am convinced that within a very short time *Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry* will become a standard textbook.

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