

A Perspective on over 1000 Psychobooks for Psychiatry and Psychology Training

Uma Perspectiva sobre 1000 Psicolivros no Ensino de Psiquiatria e Psicologia

Keywords: Books; Psychiatry/education; Psychology, Clinical/education; Teaching

Palavras-chave: Ensino; Livros; Psicologia/educação; Psiquiatria/educação

To the Editor,

We want to introduce readers to the new (old) concept of Psychobooks. The existence of Psychobooks was first hypothesized at some meetings of our group as being any kind of book that could interest and be of professional use to any mental health technician (e.g. psychiatrist, psychologist). That interest could be conscientious and explicit or implicit. The professional use could be for clinical or academic purposes, namely psychopharmacological or psychotherapeutic training.

We did a search with various terms: 'psychobooks', 'psychbooks', 'psycho books' and 'psycho-books' on PubMed.gov¹ but we didn't obtain any results. But while googling² 'psychobooks', we found many different uses for this term. We realized we did not invent the term as many internet websites referring to it already existed. The goodreads.com website included 1250 books under the category 'popular psycho books',³ with writings by prominent and respected physicians (e.g. Sigmund Freud or Oliver Sacks), but also classical or more contemporaneous authors (e.g. Fyodor Dostoyevsky or Sylvia Plath). Going through the whole list was exhausting but we felt that the Portuguese language was not represented. Many books in Portuguese were excluded, and even though some were essential and others were obscure, they also deserved inclusion in the list.

But how many types of psychobooks exist? We believe we can divide the list of psychobooks in different categories, depending on some of their characteristics:

- Books written, with a technical purpose, for teaching / training psychiatrists / psychologists.
- Books written, for the general public, by psychiatrists / psychologists.
- Books written, for the general public, by authors with a diagnosis of a psychiatric disorder.
- Books written, for the general public, where the protagonist(s) present(s) a psychiatric disorder.

What use can be found for psychobooks? We believe psychobooks can be important in terms of teaching, learning and knowledge development for mental health professionals, either in a technical field (e.g. psychopathology, psychopharmacology) or in a clinical setting (e.g. therapeutic alliance, psychotherapy). This educational use of arts for psychiatrists / psychologists is quite disseminated already for cinema and movies⁴ but should also be studied and de-

veloped for books. On the other hand, psychobooks may also be valuable in the fight against stigma in mental health, particularly among the general public but also in medical students or even senior physicians in other medical specialties.

We implemented a voting system for all of our group collaborators. From February 1st 2013 to July 10th 2018 we invited all psychiatrists and psychologists, visiting our department at *Psiquiatria Geral e Transcultural (PGT)* or joining our meetings at *Clube Regional de Falias (CRF)*, to participate in our unstructured survey. All we requested from participants was to name the psychobooks he/she ever read and to vote on each one, in a 40 point scale, from "-20 = terrible psychobook" to "+20 = excellent psychobook". After reaching one hundred voters we stopped data collection and made a basic statistical analysis.

During the five year timespan, we had a total of 250 meetings at the PGT department and CRF. During this five year period, we collected data from 100 participants, most of them psychiatrists and psychologists. All participants voted for their favorite psychobooks, so we ended up with a final list of 1149 titles. In Table 1, we present the top 10 list of our Psychobooks.

This is, to our knowledge, the first study regarding psychobooks. We feel that all of our 250 meetings not only contributed to the training of younger psychiatrist / psychologists but also enhanced the ever-evolving process of sharing knowledge and wisdom among senior professionals.

We have listed an impressive list of Portuguese and non-Portuguese psychobooks with a huge potential for teaching and sharing knowledge in psychiatry and psychology. Moreover, we believe that every participant in our ballot found at least one more interesting psychobook that sooner or later will become useful in his/her clinical practice and/or academic research.

Some of the biggest limitations of our work were: the convenience sample as all participants were invited; the absence of criteria for inclusion of the book in our list as any new book was accepted and could be included; and, finally, the asymmetry regarding the voting process, where two thirds of our psychobooks got only a single vote, some of them being quite obscure (even for us as authors).

Psychobooks exist: we asked about this concept to 100 psychiatrists / psychologists and we found more than 1000. We're almost in the turn of the first quarter of the twenty first century but books are still among the most used sources of knowledge, especially for studying and training in psychiatry.⁵ Therefore, even though new ways of learning and training are emerging, we can't underestimate the educational potential of this quite old and traditional learning tool. Book sharing is an important way to share knowledge in the Medical field. Last but not the least, we believe there is huge potential regarding the adaptation of this method to many medical specialties (e.g. Neurobooks for Neurology).

Table 1 – Psychobooks: International and Portuguese top ten

Rank	International Psychobooks				Portuguese Psychobooks			
	Title	Author	Votes (0 - 100)	Rate (-20; +20)	Title	Author	Votes (0 - 100)	Rate (-20; +20)
1	The idiot	Fyodor Dostoevsky	22	+18	Como tornar-se doente mental	Pio de Abreu	21	+15
2	The brothers Karamazov	Fyodor Dostoevsky	21	+18	O livro do desassossego	Bernardo Soares	18	+18
3	The metamorphosis	Franz Kafka	18	+17	O erro de Descartes	António Damásio	15	+17
4	If this is a man	Primo Levi	17	+18	Retalhos da vida de um médico	Fernando Namora	15	+16
5	Misery	Anton Chekhov	17	+17	Os Maias	Eça de Queiroz	13	+16
6	Werther	Goethe	16	+16	Ninguém morre sozinho	Daniel Sampaio	13	+14
7	The trial	Franz Kafka	15	+18	Meu pé de laranja lima	José Mauro de Vasconcelos	12	+17
8	On becoming a person	Carl Ransom Rogers	13	+17	O sem-amor ou o maior sem a Serotonina	António Bento	12	+17
9	One hundred years of solitude	Gabriel García Márquez	12	+18	Memória de elefante	António Lobo Antunes	12	+10
10	A small treatise on the great virtues	André Comte-Sponville	12	+17	Sem-amor sem-abrigo	António Bento e Elias Barreto	11	+16

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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Cardiometabolic Risk in Childhood: Could Bilirubin Act as a Circadian Clock-Related Mediator Via Autonomic Dysfunction?

Risco Cardiometabólico na Infância: Pode a Bilirrubina Atuar como Mediador Associado ao Relógio Circadiano Via Disfunção Autonómica?

Keywords: Autonomic Nervous System; Bilirubin; Child; Circadian Rhythm; Hypertension

Palavras-chave: Bilirrubina; Criança; Hipertensão; Ritmo Circadiano; Sistema Nervoso Autónomo

The interesting paper from Yu and colleagues on the association of neonatal serum bilirubin and childhood hypertension recently published in *Plos One*,¹ flagged up a plausible role of bilirubin as a mediator of hypertension in later life. This is a highly important topic since hypertension, a main cause of cardiometabolic associated morbidity and mortality, may affect 2% to 4% of children. Bilirubin is a toxic end-product of heme catabolism in the body, commonly seen in newborns and causing jaundice. It is detoxified mainly in the liver by means of several steps involving circadian regulated enzymatic processes.² A balanced autonomic output to the liver is crucial for maintenance of the circadian rhythmicity that ensures the normal function of liver metabolic enzymes and glucose level.³ Bilirubin production is known to oscillate in a circadian fashion. Several studies showed that free bilirubin is negatively associated with hypertension and other cardiometabolic risk factors, although with controversial is-

issues remaining to be clarified. A non-dipping hypertensive profile was also linked with nocturnal lower bilirubin levels compared to those having a dipper hypertensive profile, consolidating the circadian signature on hyperbilirubinemia associated hypertension. Furthermore, bilirubin seems to increase after light therapy not only as a result of activation of photoreceptors but also impacted by circadian clock regulatory mechanisms.⁴ Nonetheless, in their retrospective study, the authors of the aforementioned paper found that neonatal serum bilirubin levels were positively associated with childhood blood pressure/hypertension in preterm infants. This suggests that neurotoxicity of bilirubin and its plausible impact on autonomic pathways via sympathetic nerve fibers may be involved in the neonatal pathophysiological mechanisms leading to hypertension. Interestingly, in a prospective study in full-term newborn infants it was found that severe unconjugated hyperbilirubinemia may cause cardiac autonomic dysfunction, with parasympathetic predominance.⁵ These findings can also raise the important question of whether newborn babies with kernicterus are predisposed to developing hypertension or cardiovascular morbidity. Despite the contradictory observations, the relationship of hyperbilirubinemia and autonomic function and their circadian variations is particularly important in preterm babies due to the immature nature of the brain-blood barrier and consequent higher risk of toxicity and encephalopathy leading to autonomic related cardiovascular and metabolic signs.

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