



Maladapting Minds: Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Evolutionary Theory (International Perspectives in Philosophy and Psychiatry)

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Maladapting Minds discusses a number of reasons why philosophers of psychiatry should take an interest in evolutionary explanations of mental disorders and, more generally, in evolutionary thinking. First of all, there is the nascent field of evolutionary psychiatry. Unlike other psychiatrists, evolutionary psychiatrists engage with ultimate, rather than proximate, questions about mental illnesses. Being a young and youthful new discipline, evolutionary psychiatry allows for a nice case study in the philosophy of science. Secondly, philosophers of psychiatry have engaged with evolutionary theory because evolutionary considerations are often said to play a role in defining the concept of mental disorder. The basic question here is: Can the concept of mental disorder be given an objective definition, or is it rather a normative concept? Thirdly and finally, evolutionary thinking in psychiatry has often been a source of inspiration for a philosophical view on human nature. Thus evolutionary psychiatrists have suggested, for example, that man's vulnerability to mental disorders may well be one of the defining features of our species.

Written by leading authors in philosophy, psychiatry, biology and psychology, this volume illustrates that many debates in contemporary philosophy of psychiatry are profoundly influenced by evolutionary approaches to mental disorders. Conversely, it also reveals how philosophers can help contribute to the burgeoning field of evolutionary psychiatry. It is important reading for a wide range of readers interested in mental health care and philosophy.

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