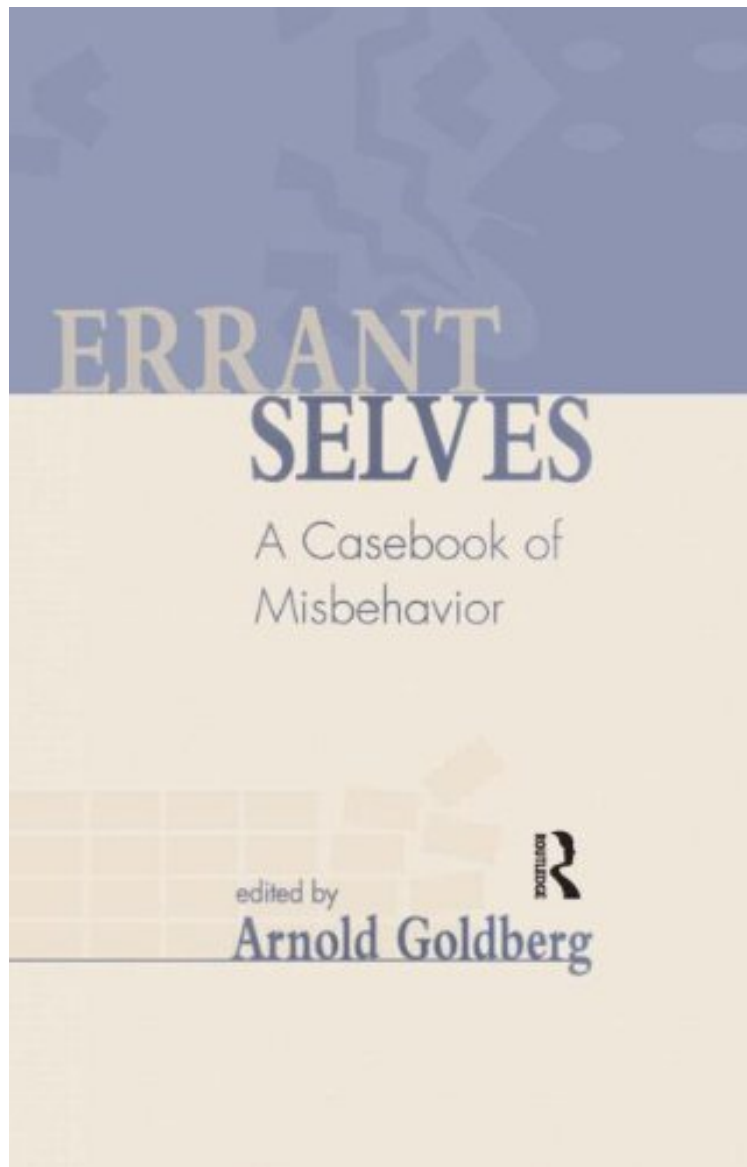


[Library ebook] Errant Selves: A Casebook of Misbehavior

Errant Selves: A Casebook of Misbehavior

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A major addition to the psychoanalytic casebook literature, *Errant Selves: A Casebook of Misbehavior* is a collection of case studies dedicated to the psychoanalytic understanding and treatment of behavior disorders. The contributors to this volume explore cases of perversion, delinquency, and addiction in which the misbehavior at issue served primarily to ward off painful affects or states of dysphoria in order to achieve a basic integrity of the self. For these patients, the pathway to self-cohesion entailed the florid acting out typical of narcissistic behavior disorders. Clinical readers of all persuasions will be intrigued by treatment narratives that chronicle the special challenges of working with patients who, in Goldberg's words, "were neither unitary selves nor persons with an easy ability to bolster or reconstitute themselves in socially acceptable ways." Of special interest is the contributors' sensitivity to what they missed with these troubled and troubling patients; they recount examples of skewed focus, of strained rationalization, even of glaring clinical omission, all of which suggest that the patients' psychic splits activated parallel splits on the part of their therapists. What emerges from the contributors' efforts, then, is very much a casebook of our time. It extends the purview of psychoanalysis to the developmental history and psychodynamics of disavowal; explores the analytic management of delinquent, perverse, and addicted patients; and examines the analyst's subjective presence in these treatments, including his or her potential for self-deception and collusion. And it does so in the context of probing a theoretical issue of continuing practical import: whether or not psychoanalytic therapy is best served by viewing the patient as a unitary individual with a coherent sense of agency and an integrated set of values and goals.

"This collection of cases is a striking example of psychoanalytic research conducted by a group of analysts sharing their work with one another. The cases are not only intriguing and exciting; they are cases rarely seen and even more rarely understood by psychoanalysts. To study the courageously acknowledged foibles and mistakes of our colleagues is both instructive and humbling." - Jerome A. Winer, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, University of Illinois, Chicago

"The major problem confronting psychoanalysis today is the paucity of detailed case presentations, the essential data of our scientific enterprise. The psychoanalysts who, under the leadership of Arnold Goldberg, have contributed to *Errant Selves* have grasped the nettle and provided us with detailed accounts of the treatment of eight patients with 'misbehavior' disorders. Although their technical approach derives from their commitment to a particular theory, self psychology, their freshly insightful and admirably candid accounts of these treatments provides a model that analysts of all persuasions should emulate. The audience for this book is as broad as the field of psychoanalysis itself." - Arnold D. Richards, M.D., Editor, JAPA

"*Errant Selves* is a fascinating, innovative, and courageous book. Eight clinicians openly and thoughtfully recount their work with patients whose aberrant behavior most often evoked disdain and condemnation both in the clinicians and in the patients themselves. The book thoughtfully explores the meaning and adaptive use of these misbehaviors and the reciprocal struggles around disavowal stimulated in many of the analysts. The powerful effect of these difficult patients on the clinicians who treated them is beautifully conveyed. The cases are vividly written and a pleasure to read. The book is a major contribution to the psychoanalytic understanding and treatment of a group of patients who many have found too difficult to treat." - Judy Kantrowitz, Ph.D., Training and Supervising Analyst, Boston Psychoanalytic Institute