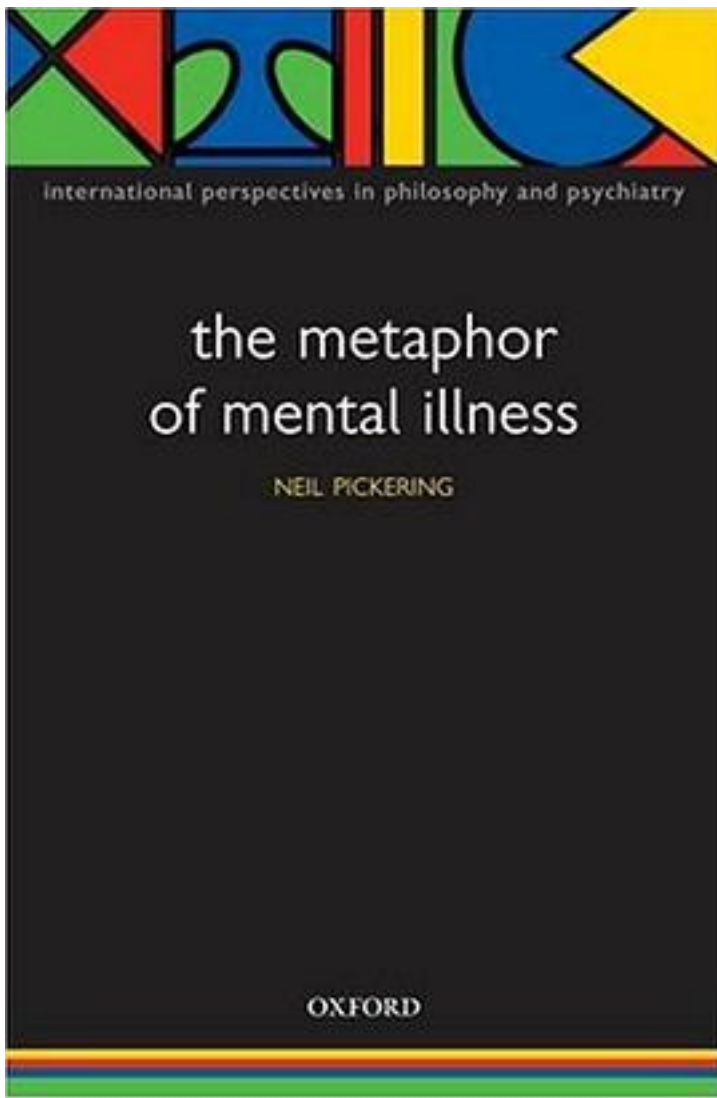


The Metaphor of Mental Illness



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Despite the currency of the notion of mental illness, its legal and medical legitimacy, and the panoply of psychiatry and other mental health services which claim to treat it, there are those who take the radical sceptical line that mental illness is a fabrication. This is a book which takes this sceptical line seriously - perhaps more seriously than almost any other book not written by sceptics themselves. "The Metaphor of Mental Illness" is a revaluation of the traditional philosophical disputes about the existence and nature of mental illness. Sceptics and apologists have generally focused on the legitimacy of extending illness from the physical to the mental, by means of the likeness argument. This says that claimed mental illnesses, from ADHD to schizophrenia, really are illnesses providing they are sufficiently similar to agreed physical illnesses. This book proposes that this argument is flawed: the likenesses to which the argument appeals appear when these examples have been categorised as illnesses, rather than the categorisation being evidenced by or derived from the likenesses. The categorisation of ADHD, schizophrenia, and so on, as illnesses is a matter of metaphor: an imaginative shift into the illness category. The book puts forward a new view of and resolution of the issues, to which it carefully guides the reader. It is a book which engages with many contemporary issues and styles of analysis, but is accessible to anyone not familiar with these. It is full of examples, both historical and modern. It is a book both for the postgraduate student coming to grips with the issues for the first time, for the researcher who is interested in a new approach to the issues, and for mental health workers such as psychiatrists, who are interested in the fundamental assumptions of their field of work.

作者介绍:

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