

BOOK REVIEWS

Reading from a very young age formed me. Books allowed me to cross from daily reality into unboundaried worlds of fantasy. This is still true today; reading remains an integral part of my being, and a lifesaver at times. As I write this, I look back on a difficult year, overshadowed by my father's cancer diagnosis last Christmas and his passing just before year-end. In between my work and caring for him, I found distraction and tranquillity in an avid return to reading. The paperbacks and hardcovers I devoured offered me a break from illness, an escape into different worlds. Immersed in all these stories, I pulled away from the stressors of my life and was transported into new realities. I connected with novel characters, was drawn into their intrigues, and related to the debris of their lives, their joys, and sorrows, and briefly forgot mine. It helped me to relax and disengage. I lost myself in thousands of pages, all the while reaching into myself and discovering fresh places to dream. The ability to step away from life for a brief moment and become one with that other world, where I forget myself, is best described by Flaubert. He said so eloquently (about writing, true, rather than reading) that 'it is a delicious thing to write, to be no longer yourself, to move in an entire universe of your own creating' (Flaubert, 1980: 203).

I wish that you might read more this year, losing and finding yourself in the pages of a book. Perhaps even a book from this review list? I have included two reviews on philosophy books, Carlisle's *Philosopher of the Heart: The restless life of Søren Kierkegaard* and Gabriel's *Neo-Existentialism*. These are followed by four reviews of psychotherapy books, Bazzano's *Nietzsche and Psychotherapy*, Wiley's *World Handbook of Existential Therapy*, Cooper's *Integrating Counselling and Psychotherapy: Directionality, synergy and social change*, and Brazier's *Ecotherapy in Practice: A Buddhist model*. Last, but not least, especially if you prefer film, a review of Hirokazu's *Shoplifters*, a movie that questions the notion of the traditional family and our (lack of) responsibility for society's left-behind, a most pertinent tale these days.

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Reference

Flaubert, G. (1980). *The Letters of Gustave Flaubert: 1830-1857*. Trans. Steegmuller, F. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, US.