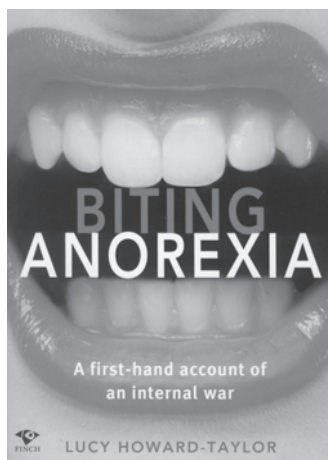


BOOK REVIEW

Anorexia: a personal story

Biting anorexia. A first-hand account of an internal war. Lucy Howard-Taylor. Sydney: Finch Publishing, 2008 (ix + 214 pp, \$24.95). ISBN 9781876 451929.

I UNDERTOOK REVIEWING this book with some trepidation. I presumed it would be yet another distant “tortured” account of anorexia. I found it quite the opposite. Lucy is an 18-year-old Australian university student. Her depiction of her mental state in anorexia is quite extraordinary. I know that anorexia affects the brain negatively, as a result of both malnutrition and the pervasive thinking disorder. It isn't until the later chapters that you realise the extreme blunting of her intellect that has occurred. Lucy's diary is an extraordinarily honest, most intelligent account detailing the process of her illness and pathway towards recovery.



I was particularly struck by the difficulties she experienced at all times, and by the depth and sophistication of her thoughts and the enormity of the struggle she went through in attempting to overcome her illness.

This book really is the most lucid document and one I have started to recommend to colleagues and to patients. It gave me an insight I had not expected to gain into the extent of the damage done by this illness and the extreme difficulties endured to overcome it.

Simon D Clarke

Medical Director, Adolescent Medicine Unit
Children's Hospital at Westmead, Sydney, NSW