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Cook and Garnetts' "Spectrum women: Walking to the beat of autism" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Cook, B. and Garnett, M. (Eds.). (2018). *Spectrum women: Walking to the beat of autism*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 332 pp. \$21.99. ISBN 9781785924347

The book tells the experiences of several women on the autism spectrum, many of whom were only diagnosed in mid-life. Each chapter includes a biographical portion written by an autistic woman who recounts her story of how she was diagnosed with autism, and then includes a section written by a clinical psychologist, Dr. Michelle Garnett, who specializes in Asperger's syndrome and autism. Chapter titles include Personal Relationships, Personal Safety, Independence, Communication, and Emotional Regulation, among others. In addition to Dr. Garnett, the other editor of the book is Barb Cook who is editor of the magazine *Spectrum Women*. The contributors are from Australia, Europe, and North America.

This book may be helpful to patrons who wonder if they are on the autism spectrum themselves, or for those who have loved ones on the higher-functioning end of the autism spectrum, to give readers a perspective of that diagnosis. However, it should not be necessarily be taken as typical of all people with autism or even all women with autism. While acknowledging that autism is a spectrum, the contributors to the book seem mostly to be at the same or similar points along that spectrum. They report having jobs (more or less white collar), and living independently. All of the contributors were diagnosed with Autism or Asperger's as adults.

Though the book would perhaps best be classified as memoir or perhaps self-help, there are eight pages of end notes, along with both an additional bibliography and suggested resources.

This book would be most suitable for a library that has a larger collection on Autism as it provides a narrow and limited, though nonetheless valuable, insight into the topic. It should be noted that the book was written from a secular perspective, has a "content warning" in the front matter, and may discuss topics that could be uncomfortable for a conservative Christian audience.

Reviewer

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