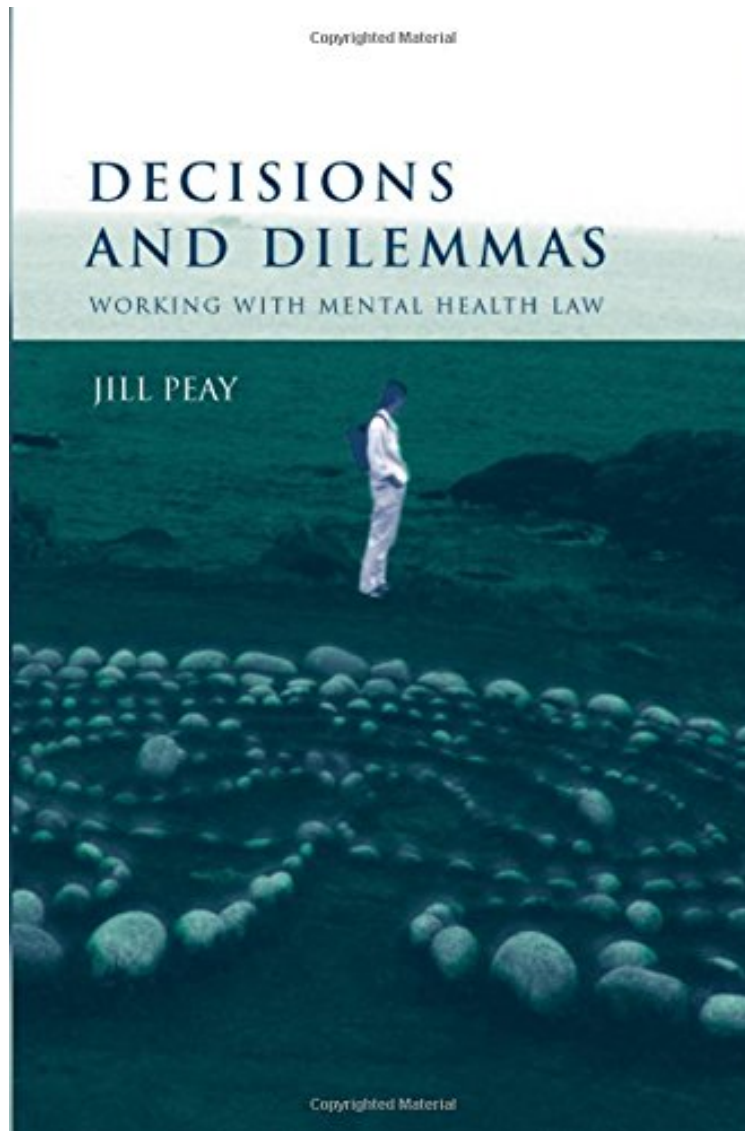


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Decisions and Dilemmas: Working with Mental Health Law

Jill Peay

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Jill Peay : Decisions and Dilemmas: Working with Mental Health Law before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Decisions and Dilemmas: Working with Mental Health Law:

In the field of mental health law, we entrust decisions with consequences of the utmost gravity - decisions about compulsory medical treatment and the loss of liberty - to doctors and approved social workers. Yet, how do these non-

lawyers make decisions where the legitimacy of those decisions derives from law? This book examines the practical, ethical and legal terrain of duo-disciplinary decision-making: given identical cases, what dilemmas do psychiatrists and approved social workers encounter, do they reach the same or similar decisions and, most critically, how are those decisions justified? At a time of ferment in mental health law, this book, through its narrative format, provides a better understanding of the dilemmas posed.

In her foreword, Lady Justice Hale (as she then was) describes this book as 'fascinating' and 'a stimulating read'. This reviewer unreservedly agrees. In summary, this book deserves to be read and considered by all who care about, and debate, the direction of mental health law, not least of course by those faced with the responsibility of devising the appropriate, ethical and practical legislation of the future. John Horne *Journal of Mental Health Law* March 2004 Jill Peay's fascinating book provides an in-depth look into the way approved workers and psychiatrists use the law to make decisions about compulsory admissions and treatment. .this is a useful resource for social workers and psychiatrists who want to develop their skills in applying the law and better understand the process they are part of. Paul Cutler *Mental Health Today* May 2004 This book fills an important gap and will provide the reader with many insights into the nature of decision-making in the mental health context. Nicola Glover-Thomas *Medical Law* July 2004 At a time when a great deal concerning mental health law, ethics and practice is in the melting pot, this book makes a highly-distinctive and welcome contribution to the debate taking place. A short review cannot do justice to the rich (and sometimes disquieting) material contained in Peays careful critical analysis. The manner in which the mental health professionals in her sample reached their decisions is described in meticulous and fascinating detail. In her foreword to the book, Lady Justice Hale (who will be known to many readers in her former academic role as Brenda Hoggett), describes the book as fascinating, a statement which I echo wholeheartedly. I think this book is a must for all who are thoughtful about the compulsory powers afforded in the current mental health legislation. Herschel Prins, *Loughborough University Psychiatric Bulletin* August 2004 This is a timely publication in light of the continuing uncertainty surrounding the future direction of mental health reform. .there are positive and important lessons to be learnt from *Decisions and Dilemmas*...it makes an important contribution to the ongoing debate about the shape of a new Mental Health Act by providing stimulating and valuable insights into non-legal practitioners' attitudes to, and application of, the mental health legislation. ...the book will primarily be of interest to those who work with and research mental health law and policy, it..also [has] broader appeal for those who are interested generally in the process of multi-disciplinary decision-making in a quasi-legal field, the impact of research on practice and the effectiveness of the law as a means of achieving change and influencing practice. Judy Laing *Modern Law* November 2004 About the Author Jill Peay is a Reader in the Department of Law at the London School of Economics and Political Science.