



Margaret Olley joins the Black Dog Institute's book launch –
"Modelling and Managing the Depressive Disorders"

"There is life after depression," the words of Australian Icon, the 82-year-old painter Margaret Olley. Describing how she had experienced depression, Olley said: "Looking out at the harbour – half of it was blue and the other half was black greyness. That was the beginning of the black hole. It got worse and worse and I did not know what was happening to me." Olley said she was fortunate to be helped by Professor Gordon Parker, Executive Director of the Black Dog Institute.

Depression, according to Olley, is so rampant it is like a bushfire. Her words hit home to an audience of mainly psychiatrists when she launched the clinical guide "Modelling and Managing the Depressive Disorders", written by Professor Gordon Parker and Associate Professor Vijaya Manicavasagar, from the Black Dog Institute/University of NSW. The guide will be available to professionals from December 2005. The DSM and ICD mental illness classificatory systems define mood disorder as essentially a single condition varying only by severity; however, there are major problems with this approach. In this book, Professor Parker and Associate Professor Manicavasagar expose the weakness in the existing models, based on there being some specific defined manifestations, including melancholia and psychotic depression, as well as versions of the condition highly dependent on life stresses and personality styles. They argue that depression can exist as a disease, a disorder, a syndrome and a normal reaction, and it therefore requires a multi-modal approach to conceptualisation and management. Highly illustrated in full colour throughout and written in an entertaining but informative and practical style, this book should be read by all those responsible for managing or caring for individuals suffering from depression.