

Journal of Boredom Studies

Issue 3, 2025, pp. 1-4

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15798616>

<https://www.boredomsociety.com/jbs>



Maik Bieleke, Wanja Wolff, and Corinna S. Martarelli (eds.): [The Routledge International Handbook of Boredom](#). Routledge, 2024, pp. 418. ISBN: 978-1-032-22186-1

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How to cite this paper: Greenberg, D. (2025). Maik Bieleke, Wanja Wolff, and Corinna S. Martarelli (eds.): *The Routledge International Handbook of Boredom*. Routledge, 2024, pp. 418. ISBN: 978-1-032-22186-1. *Journal of Boredom Studies*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15798616>

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Received 04 June 2025; Accepted 05 June 2025.

The study of boredom is not boring. In fact, as this recent volume aims to demonstrate, boredom studies has a diverse and fascinating future. Intended both for seasoned scholars and those new to the field, *The Routledge International Handbook of Boredom*, edited by Maik Bieleke, Wanja Wolff, and Corinna S. Martarelli, covers a wide range of areas within boredom studies. The variety of topics included illustrate the many ways in which the field has expanded in the past few decades and the directions which can still be pursued.

The handbook is divided into three sections. The first part covers the fundamentals of boredom: its definitions, the history of the concept, and different methods of measuring it. Chapter 1, written by the book's editors, serves as an introduction. In Chapter 2, Wanja Wolff, Vanessa C. Radtke, and Corinna S. Martarelli consider various definitions of boredom. This is followed by an exploration of the tools used to measure boredom in Chapter 3, written by Corinna S. Martarelli and Nathanael S. Jost. Taking up the same discussion as Wolff, Radtke, and Martarelli, in Chapter 4 Andreas Elpidorou closely examines the nature of boredom to distinguish it from other affects. Chapter 5, written by Noah T. Reed, Nazim Asani, Van Dang, and Heather C. Lench, analyzes the functions of boredom, both negative and positive. In Chapter 6, Reinhard Pekrun and Thomas Goetz provide an alternative view of boredom based on the control-value theory. The relationship between boredom and meaning is further explored by Eric R. Igou, Muireann K. O'Dea, Katy Y. Y. Tam, and Wijnand A. P. van Tilburg in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8, which ends this section, Josefa Ros Velasco provides a thorough overview of psychological approaches to boredom.

The second part focuses on some of the phenomena that contributes to the experience or cause of boredom. In Chapter 9, Maik Bieleke, Wanja Wolff, and Alex Bertrams examine the relationship between boredom and self-control. Following this, in Chapter 10 Corinna S. Martarelli and Ambroise Baillifard consider the role of mind-wandering ("daydreaming") in the experience and relief of boredom. In Chapter 11, David Weibel and Bartholomäus Wissmath consider the connection between boredom and the state of flow. Chapter 12, written by Allison Drody, Ofir Yakobi, and James Danckert, takes a slightly different approach than the preceding chapters, focusing on the use of neuroimaging in boredom studies. In Chapter 13, Wijnand A. P. van Tilburg, Christian S. Chan, Andrew B. Moynihan, and Eric R. Igou provide an overview of literature on boredom proneness. Turning again to the relationship between boredom and other phenomena which began this section, in Chapter 14 Christine Emilie Tonne Artak and Stefan Pfattheicher examine the connection between boredom and aggression.

Finally, the third part discusses some common contexts in which boredom arises. The section begins with an examination of academic boredom in Chapter 15, written by Thomas Goetz, Lisa Stempfer, Reinhard Pekrun, Wijnand A. P. van Tillburg, and Anastasiya A. Lipnevich. In Chapter 16, Edwin A. J. van Hooft and Madelon L. M. van Hooff follow this with a systemic overview of research concerning work-related boredom. In Chapter 17, Elizabeth Weybright and Linda L. Caldwell turn again to the adolescent demographic of Chapter 15, but with a focus on the experience of boredom during leisure. Chapter 18, written by Asli Erdemli and Géraldine Coppin, moves away from situational contexts to examine the relationship between boredom, food intake, and weight. In Chapter 19, Wanja Wolff, Christian Weich, and Ursula Fischer review the experience of boredom in a variety of sports-related contexts. Carrie Anne Marshall, in Chapter 20, focuses on the relationship between boredom and homelessness.

In Chapter 21, Aenne Briemann and Peter Dayan examine the nature of aesthetic boredom—that is, boredom which arises in relation to the senses, particularly sight. Chapter 22, written by Virginia Tze, Patti Parker, and Lia Daniels, takes a different approach; it reviews suggestions for boredom intervention and education. Finally, Chapter 23, to which every author involved in the volume contributed, provides an overview of the book's contents.

Overall, the handbook proves a thorough, well-researched, and accessible introduction to a variety of topics and fields under the scope of boredom studies. Of particular note is the engagement between the individual chapters, which strengthens the cohesion of the volume and makes it easier for readers to pick-and-choose the chapters most interesting to or relevant for them. Though the contributors generally do a great job of providing readers both with the necessary information needed to make sense of their arguments and references to relevant prior literature, there is a significant number of instances in which field-specific—often scientific—terminology is not clarified. This may pose an accessibility issue for general readers, or even scholars, such as myself, who do not have a background in the sciences. Some more explanation would have been helpful in this regard, to ensure that all readers are able to clearly understand the information presented in each chapter.

Moreover, the heavy focus on the sciences is a slight detriment to the volume. I would have liked to see a stronger arts and humanities presence. The field of boredom studies has expanded just as rapidly in this area as it has in the sciences (e.g. Broad, 2018; Carerra, 2023; Elpidorou and Ros Velasco, 2025; Gardiner and Haladyn, 2016; Mosurinjohn, 2022; Snell, 2015; Toohey, 2011). Including material from such disciplines would only have strengthened and supported the existing chapters, while simultaneously demonstrating the broad reach and applicability of boredom studies. In this sense, the title of the book is perhaps misleading and inadequate—it suggests an exploration of *all* strands of boredom studies, but its attention is devoted almost exclusively to the sciences, in particular psychology.

In addition, there were several topics which were briefly mentioned throughout the volume, which I wish had been elaborated upon. For example, the connection between ADHD and boredom is prevalent in several chapters (Chapters 3, 12, 13, 16, 21), but though it informs part of these chapters' arguments, it is not fully explored itself. As this topic appears to be prominent within the field, I believe it would have been worthwhile to grant it more space in this volume. Along the same line, the role of technology in creating and mediating boredom appears to be significant as well (Chapters 10, 11, 15, 17). Considering the prevalence of this topic, both in the aforementioned chapters and in the wider field (e.g. Broad, 2018; Mosurinjohn, 2022), I believe a discussion focused on the impact of technology would have contributed greatly to this volume. This is not to say, though, that I find the volume lacking—these are merely preferences of mine, as a humanities scholar, which I believe would have added to this already diverse collection. In many cases, the perhaps limited arguments or reviews in the chapters prove advantageous, as they make clear the gaps and unexplored pathways of boredom studies and, therefore, may encourage readers to pursue such gaps themselves.

Despite these small criticisms, I found the volume to be on the whole enlightening and well-written. Every reader is sure to find at least one chapter which interests them, and likely many more than one. For my part, there was no chapter which I found tedious or uninteresting—

and all of them (re-)introduced me to aspects of the field with which I had little or no prior engagement. In the first chapter, the volume's editors write: "We wish you an exciting journey through the landscape of boredom research!" (Bieleke et al., 2024, p. 2). And indeed, to read through *The Routledge International Handbook of Boredom Studies* is to embark on a fruitful and exciting journey. In that alone, the handbook presents a great opportunity for boredom scholars, and those wishing to learn more about the field, to dip their toes into some of the many topics under the scope of boredom studies. As I discovered new areas which sparked my interest, I hope this volume will entice readers to continue exploring the fascinating—and certainly never boring—world of boredom.

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