

to changes in neuronal regulation and disturbed brain chemistry". However, it is important not to be merely reductionist when giving the physical side its full weight and depression is also a disability of mind and involves changes in thinking. Genetic, constitutional and environmental factors are all of importance and may all be operative in the individual sufferer.

Temperament significantly determines the development of affective disorders and may also initiate diagnostic confusion and delay. In skilfully drawing out his arguments on the influence of personality with well-chosen case examples, Whybrow comments, "In practical terms this means that many individuals suffered unnecessarily, often receiving the wrong treatment or no treatment at all for an illness that, with optimum care, can be more effectively treated than virtually any other complex ailment in contemporary medicine".

Comparative morphology, from the lizard brain through to recent advances in neuroimaging for affective disorders, is described, and is lucid and informative for doctor and layman alike, "We do not know yet how close these observations lie to the anatomical truth of the matter; what we do know is that activity among the limbic centres is poorly regulated in melancholia and states of abnormal mood, and as this dysregulation progresses, disturbances of emotion, thinking, and body housekeeping emerge. Brain imaging for the first time offers the potential to track, as they occur, the shifting patterns of metabolism that must underlie these changes, building a vital bridge between neuro-anatomy and subjective experience". The link between subjective feelings and objective brain changes is made easily comprehensible, as is the link between normal homeostasis and the effects of stress resulting in mood changes. Throughout the book technical information is placed in digestible portions alongside informative personal stories, so the chemistry, although up-to-date and detailed, is easy to assimilate.

The balance is well maintained in an excellent account of the psychological and social factors involved, drawing on attachment theory and cognitive approaches to management. This is linked to the earlier account of the development of the limbic system with the mammalian brain and its importance for emotional and social control.

The chapter on treatment focuses attention on both physical factors in treatment,

such as antidepressant medication and electroconvulsive therapy, and dynamic, family and social factors, with psychotherapy and especially cognitive therapy being described. The case is well made for a combined approach using both physical and psychosocial treatments. This, of course, emphasises the role of a well-trained psychiatrist with substantial background in both physical medicine and psychotherapeutic treatments in the management of manic-depressive illnesses.

This multi-faceted view emerges again in the final chapter where it is made explicit that many different approaches and concepts must be combined in treatment. Personal responsibility for seeking treatment and achieving recovery is discussed and "judicious pharmacological intervention plus a programme of self-education" is described. The importance of the family is emphasised, and how these illnesses can destroy families.

Do you have a local benefactor who is thinking of giving some money to psychiatric research but is not sure whether this is justified from the results? Is a young person of your acquaintance wondering about psychiatry as a career choice? Do you have regular discussions with someone who discredits the whole intellectual enterprise of psychiatry? If any of these or other options pertain you could do a lot worse than giving them *A Mood Apart* to read.

**A. C. P. Sims** Professor, Division of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences in Relation to Medicine, Clinical Sciences Building, St James's University Hospital, Leeds LS9 7TF

### **The Politics of Attachment: Towards a Secure Society**

Edited by Sebastien Kraemer & Jane Roberts. 1996. 250 pp. £15.95 (pb). London: Free Association Books. ISBN 1-85343-3446

Academic work in the social and medical sciences has become increasingly specialised. Researchers focus their attention on relatively narrow areas of interest and draw on sub-branches of disciplines familiar only to those working in the same field. One reason for welcoming this book is that it bucks the trend. Contributors to *The Politics of Attachment* come from a wide

range of disciplines and include practitioners as well as academics. Their common purpose is to analyse the sources of insecurity in contemporary society and to suggest what might be done to construct stronger social relationships. The elevation of two of the authors, Mo Mowlam and Tessa Jowell, to posts within the British Government in the time that has elapsed since the book was written adds to its interest for prospective readers.

In their introduction, the editors explain the thinking that lies behind the book. At its simplest, their aim is to join in the clamour to refute Margaret Thatcher's claim that "there is no such thing as society". In so doing, they seek to reinforce the argument of writers such as Etzioni and Fukuyama that there is a need to rediscover the importance of social networks and trust. To this extent, Kraemer and Roberts and their fellow authors are riding the ways of fashionable thinking. The distinctive claim of this book is to go beyond current fashions and to argue that political theory and public policy can be enriched by drawing on the work of development psychologists. In particular, as the book's title indicates, the aspiration is to make connections between attachment theory, as developed by Bowlby and others, and the search by politicians such as Tony Blair for an analysis and a set of policy prescriptions which transcends the perspectives of both the 'New Right' and old Labour.

Running through the book is not only a challenge to the rampant individualism of Margaret Thatcher but also a critique of the communitarian approach articulated by Etzioni. This is most apparent in the contributions by Murray and Campbell. While Etzioni's writings are acknowledged to have value in acting as a counterweight to the philosophy of the 'me' generation, Murray argues that communitarianism lacks any theory of moral development. The contribution of attachment theory is, in part, that it seeks to overcome this omission and to ground an alternative approach within a sound theoretical framework.

Etzioni also comes under attack from fellow sociologist, Ray Pahl. In one of the most entertaining chapters of the book, Pahl emphasises the importance of friendships and their role in building supportive social networks. On a related theme, Helena Kennedy, another contributor close to the Blair government, draws heavily on Putnam's work on social capital to argue for radical changes to the political system.

Putnam's seminal analysis of economic development in Italy, which suggested that economically successful areas demonstrated high levels of trust and reciprocity and strong local networks and associations, underpins Kennedy's argument that these values need to be rediscovered as Tony Blair takes forward his project. In this respect, Kennedy echoes the argument of economist Paul Ormerod that a successful capitalist economy depends fundamentally on trust.

John Bennington adds a further disciplinary perspective in commenting on the contribution of local authorities to the rebuilding of community. Writing as a political scientist, and relying heavily on the work of John Stewart, Bennington offers a thoughtful analysis of the decline in faith in local government and the conditions that need to be met if local authorities are to take on a role in community governance defined in its widest sense. One of the strengths of this contribution is the use of empirical examples showing what initiatives local authorities have already taken and pointing the way for others to follow.

What then of the central thesis that lies behind the book? Kraemer and Roberts anticipate criticism that psychiatrists should "return to the metaphorical couch" and not meddle in areas outside their expertise by identifying three ways in which the political domain could benefit from incorporating some of the tenets of attachment theory. First, the theory provides a coherent underpinning for current preoccupations with community, stakeholding and solidarity. Second, a politics of attachment could inform policy in areas such as criminal justice, housing and local government. Third, they maintain that attachment theory can help to inform the way in which politics are implemented, for example by enabling politicians to design their interventions in a way that is sensitive to the complexity of social relationships.

Given that these are large claims, it is to be expected that the book is more convincing in addressing some of these issues than others. For this reviewer, the contributors are at their most persuasive in demonstrating how attachment theory offers a way of grounding the rediscovery of society within an established theoretical context. This applies particularly to the early chapters by Holmes and Murray. They are less successful in making the connection with policy ideas and the implementation pro-

cess. To be fair, some authors, such as Pound, do draw specific policy implications but the overall tendency is for debate of these issues to be at a high level of generality.

As politicians also struggle to move from the big picture to the fine detail, this is hardly surprising, but there is little escaping the conclusion that this is the main challenge for the future. To take just one example, the reform of the welfare state, it is not clear how a politics of attachment would translate into reform of the social security system which avoids the weaknesses of the Beveridge model while rejecting the radical aspirations of the New Right. Frank Field's writings in this area offer some hints on how theory and policy might be connected more effectively but at this stage the principles are clearer than the practice.

In their afterword, the editors remind us of their purpose, and, in a somewhat defensive tone, concede that their ideas are hardly new but merit repeated confirmation. As they conclude, in writing about the politics of attachment, "we have taken a leap from what is known about intimate relationships to what could be achieved in political ones" (p. 241). In truth, they have no need to be defensive because the contributors demonstrate through their work that a multi-disciplinary perspective is sorely needed. *The Politics of Attachment* may not have all the answers, but it raises the right questions and will be uncomfortable reading for those on both the right and the left.

---

**Chris Ham** Health Services Management Centre, University of Birmingham, Park House, 40 Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2RT

### **Healing the Mind: A History of Psychiatry from Antiquity to the Present**

By Michael H. Stone. New York & London: W.W. Norton. 1997. 516 pp. £35 (hb). ISBN 0-393-70222-7

Hunter & Macalpine's incomparable *Three Hundred Years of Psychiatry: 1535-1860*, published in 1963 (London: Oxford University Press) was undoubtedly the most important history of psychiatry published in recent times. After that there was a long lull before a trickle of psychiatric histories

began to emerge. Now that trickle has become a flood, so that the student today can luxuriate in a wide range of relevant literature in the shape of journals, individual papers, chapters in books as well as single-author books. It is difficult to keep pace, but it is noteworthy that of the four books I would personally recommend, two British (G. E. Berrios & H. Freeman (eds) (1991) *150 Years of British Psychiatry 1841-1991*. London: Gaskell; H. Freeman & G. E. Berrios (eds) (1996) *150 Years of Psychiatry, vol. II: The Aftermath*. London: Athlone Press) and two North American (L. Gumwell & N. Tones (1995) *Madness in America: Cultural and Medical Perceptions of Mental Illness before 1914*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; E. Shorter (1997) *A History of Psychiatry*. New York: John Wiley & Sons) all but one were published in the past three years.

Dr Michael Stone, our present author, adds to this lengthening list. He has undertaken a Herculean task, in short, to span the history of psychiatry from alpha to omega, from classical antiquity to the emergence of DSM-IV. The result is that he has written a book, uniquely well organised, packed with information and with a useful addendum putting the evolution of psychiatry in some chronological perspective.

Where he fails – and he was destined to fail because of the magnitude of his undertaking – is in what he omits rather than what he includes. For example: psychiatry, as a distinct corpus of knowledge, dates back no further than the turn of the 18th century. If Dr Stone felt impelled to go back as far as the early 17th century he could, with great benefit, have included the monumental work of Richard Napier (1559-1634) whose 60 volumes of medical practice are housed in the Ashmolean in Oxford (see M. Macdonald (1981) *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Napier, an English Renaissance magus, incorporated elements of theology, alchemy and, in particular, astrological medicine into the treatment of patients many of whom were suffering from the same mental disorders as today's psychiatrists are called upon to treat.

All in all, I feel that British psychiatry is somewhat short-changed in this history. It is true that our giants, Samuel Tuke, John Conolly, John Haslam, Forbes Winslow and the like, are generously included. But,