

I find this method of ongoing assessment attractive. Unfortunately, closer study was disappointing, revealing a number of errors unacceptable in a teaching manual.

The section on neuropharmacology is weak; particularly so in that the treatments described for hypertension are outdated and those for depression are both older and different from the drugs currently in use in the UK. Most of the other faults can be attributed to the fact that the authors are not clinicians. The wrong sex ratio is given for cluster headaches; only one form of hemiplegic migraine is described; Huntington's chorea and senile chorea are probably a continuum; narcolepsy and sleep apnoea overlap and cannot always be sharply demarcated; an idiosyncratic method of coma grading is presented which bears no relation to the Glasgow Coma Scale; clinicians are taught that the presence of a brain tumour is normally suggested by evidence of a progression of neurological symptoms or signs. This latter fact is obfuscated by unhelpful questions such as: "Which of the following are clinical characteristics of brain tumours – 1. visual loss, 2. psychiatric symptoms, 3. nausea and vomiting, and 4. seizures?", or by the suggestion, earlier in the text, that papilloedema is an early and reliable sign of a tumour. Finally, I believe that the acumen of my psychiatric colleagues is such that, faced with a patient who presents with a neuropsychiatric symptom complex, they would not have to await the development of ophthalmologic abnormalities before clinching the diagnosis of tabes dorsalis.

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**The Mentally Disordered Offender.** By SEYMOUR L. HALLECK. Washington: American Psychiatric Press Inc. 1988. 225 pp. £13.95.

The author is widely respected in forensic psychiatry. He describes himself as a clinician, academician, and correctional administrator with interests in criminology and criminal law. He declares his views unequivocally: that the US criminal justice system deals with crimes, not criminals, and it depends on lengthy imprisonment which is both expensive and excessive. The severity of the system fosters a large amount of civil rights litigation which helps no-one. In a plea which Halleck recognises will have few supporters, he calls for a return to the rehabilitative approach.

In arguing for a greater emphasis on rehabilitation, Halleck recognises that this means more intermediate sentences. For purely economic reasons, society will demand that individuals are changed, and so a rehabilitative model will ultimately be forced. If really genuine attempts are made to provide treatment now, we can ensure that these inevitable developments are humanistic rather than oppressive.

There is a discussion on the subject of mental disorder resulting in transfer from prison to security hospital which will find favour with those who advocate a greater use of prison transfer, so that individuals can be moved back to custody if they are found to be untreatable in hospital. The chapters on lack of capacity and insanity are largely concerned with US practice, whereas the subject of sentencing and treatment of special groups contains a discussion of dangerousness which has broad appeal.

The author describes the way in which mentally disordered offenders are both recognised and ignored in hospitals and prisons. How they are treated is constantly changing, and depends on a resonance between social protection, beneficence, and justice. The speed with which the ethical aspects of such subjects as genetic engineering, surrogacy, and transplanting have been dealt with raises questions as to why so many moral issues are still unresolved in forensic psychiatry.

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**Chronic Mental Illness in Children and Adolescents.**

Edited by JOHN G. LOONEY. Washington DC: American Psychiatric Press. 1988. 270 pp. £25.00.

This is an account of a population which is mixed and arbitrarily defined. Mental disability does not qualify for inclusion as such unless there is an added psychiatric disorder such as autism, although many might consider the latter to be no more an illness than any other form of handicap. On the other hand, the more topical issue of post-traumatic disability is omitted, perhaps because it is more usually associated with early adulthood.

The book is based on the proceedings of a conference in Dallas. There are 13 detailed and well-referenced chapters which cover the field of chronic disturbance comprehensively. The origin explains the occasional patch of rhetoric, and it is to be expected both that the overview will be sometimes superficial and that there should be some overlap between the authors.

The American scene is surveyed, and there are good accounts of the advantages and drawbacks of the intertwined intricacies of public and private sector care. The extent and variety of American services means that there is much that is comparable with our own. We can learn from their example, and thereby might avoid being tied either to repeat their mistakes or to reinvent their wheels. This is not a book about clinical management: although there are some poignant vignettes, these are to set the scene. It is a book about the provision of services, and is for those who plan and campaign for such. It might provide much grist to a parliamentary mill.

In this country the quality of our special schools has masked many of the problems associated with chronic

disorder. It is often at school-leaving that these are flushed into an unsupported open. Where before these patients were tidied away into the mental hospitals, now the pursuit of care in the community means that this provision is no longer available. Many alternatives are suggested, but few succeed in the face of inadequate funds, enthusiasm, or expertise. Here is a useful introduction for those who find that they have to suggest and implement yet one more solution.

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**Viruses, Immunity, and Mental Disorders.** Edited by EDOUARD KURSTAK, Z. J. LIPOWSKI and P. V. MOROZOV. New York: Plenum Publishing Corporation. 1987. 468 pp. \$65.00.

This volume contains the proceedings of the first World Conference on Viral Diseases, Immunity & Mental Health, held in Montreal in 1984. That it has taken nearly four years to reach the shelves probably reflects the massive editorial task of soliciting 42 chapters from 136 international contributors.

The first of the five sections concerns viruses and organic mental disorders. The opening chapters discuss slow viruses and transmissible dementias. Although this area is fertile ground for conjecture and controversy (e.g. should such agents be regarded as viruses or not?), there is also considerable consensus. Other worthwhile contributions review the sequelae of herpes virus infections (Greenwood) and infectious mononucleosis (Hendler), the latter lucidly considering the difficulties of studying psychopathology due to the ubiquitous EB virus.

Part 2 relates to viruses and functional mental disorders. The viral hypothesis of schizophrenia has been enthusiastically pursued in Eastern Europe, and it is an engaging feature of the book that contributions from the Eastern bloc appear alongside more familiar sources such as the Northwick Park group. The empirical evidence presented here is less than persuasive. A Czech/Soviet group found raised HSV antibody titres in schizophrenic subjects, but only in Czechoslovakia, not in Siberia. They were unsuccessful in isolating viruses. Other Russians found paramyxoviruses in post-mortem brains of 'febrile schizophrenia' cases, but the diagnosis would not be universally recognised and clinical detail is inadequate. Israeli and Italian virological and immunological studies were also negative. The only chapter in this section not on schizophrenia (Amsterdam *et al*) is an interesting small study demonstrating antibodies to Borna virus in some affective disorder patients. Experimental inoculation of the virus in tree shrews produces a chronic cyclical behavioural syndrome, potentially a model for bipolar disorder.

The third section discusses various models of possible

viral aetiology of neuropsychiatric disorders. These chapters are of limited interest to clinical psychiatrists.

The longest part of the book is entitled 'Immunity, interferon and psychiatric disorders'. A reader limited for time is recommended to read no more than the excellent review by DeLisi which introduces the section. It is authoritative and more balanced than some other contributions. Various immunological abnormalities have been identified, including decreased immunoglobulins, abnormal lymphocyte function, and autoantibodies. The problem remains that it is unknown whether such observations bear any relation to aetiology or are secondary phenomena.

The final section is a miscellany, including a workmanlike review of encephalitis lethargica by Hoenig & Abbey.

Frequently stimulating, this book contains contributions from leading authorities, and demonstrates the limits of knowledge in several directions. On the other hand, most of the worthwhile material has already been published; and, if not, the rest cannot have impressed the peer reviewers! It is already dated in that only two chapters concern AIDS, and the discussion of the post-viral syndrome has also been overtaken by recent advances. My overall impression is paradoxical: I enjoyed reading it, but could not wholeheartedly recommend its purchase. Borrow it if the local library has a copy, or skim through it in the bookshop.

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**Humors, Hormones and the Mind.** By BERNARD T. DONOVAN. Basingstoke: Macmillan. 1988. 291pp. £4.00 (pb), £14.95 (hb).

This book is an overview of human hormonal action, their controlling mechanisms, and most importantly their effects on behaviour. It is written by a well-known authority and is aimed at a wide readership, including the non-specialist. Donovan has written a clear non-technical book that is easily accessible and never boring. Indeed, even for the specialist a book of this nature is most welcome, as the profusion of knowledge in the field makes it at times difficult to see the wood for the trees.

The book is divided into three sections: an introductory section, a section on hormonal systems, and the final, and longest, section which discusses hormonal effects on the mind. The artificiality of such a layout is recognised by the author, who provides numerous cross-references so that those seeking more substantial information can easily access other sections. The meat of the book is the third section, which deals with hormonal effects on behaviour, including chapters on the hormonal contribution to masculinity and femininity. By avoiding dogmatism and combining fact with scientific