

informal and formal neighbourhood services. It combines qualitative and quantitative methodology, employs microscale social studies and multiunit aggregate analyses, and reports research on the scope and quality of practice.

Bulmer reports that Abrams admired American studies of neighbourhoods, but it is difficult to find more important work on the topic than the research reported here. This book should win an appreciative audience among readers in several social sciences, academic disciplines, and professional fields in addition to those in mental health.

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Marriage and Family Enrichment. Edited by WALLACE DENTON. New York: The Haworth Press. 1986. Pp 125. \$29.95.

Marriage and Family Enrichment has grown out of the marriage guidance movements. Beginning in Europe and the USA early in the 1960s, a number of counsellors and therapists (including David and Vera Mace in London) sought to develop methods to help couples actively attend to the untapped, underdeveloped strengths in their marital relationships. The aim was to reach people *before* severe problems arise and threaten a breakdown or motivate an approach to a doctor, social worker, or counsellor with a 'sick' marriage.

A gradual accumulation of experience in this preventative, 'well marriage' based approach to relationships has made it possible for Denton and his co-contributors to put together a practical little book. Those who are not familiar with the notion of enrichment will find the book a good introduction to the history, philosophy and practice of this group-based approach. Of particular note are the chapters which systematically explore how leaders can be trained, couples or families selected to participate in the enrichment groups, and timetables ('ground plans') made for the group meetings. The limitations to this approach are also discussed. The chapters are clearly set out, with illustrative case examples.

This book would be of direct interest to those working in community psychiatry, or where professional resources are turned toward prevention and self-help. The enrichment approach could be viewed as a contribution to the growing interest in a holistic/healing approach to couples and families.

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Clinical and Pharmacological Studies in Psychiatric Disorders. Edited by GRAHAM D. BURROWS, TREVOR R. NORMAN and LORRAINE DENNERSTEIN. London: John Libbey. 1986. Pp 394. £26.00.

This book represents selected papers from the 14th CINP Congress, held in Florence in 1984. It is divided

into eight sections, covering affective disorders (both pharmacological aspects and clinical studies); anxiety, panic disorders and stress; psycho-neuroendocrinology; schizophrenia; basic neuropharmacology; and Alzheimer's disease and psychogeriatrics. The emphasis is on new developments in biological psychiatry. There are papers on desipramine and central adrenoceptor function, circadian rhythms, biochemical correlates of L-deprenyl, antidepressants, and brain levels of thyroid-releasing hormone. There are a number of other basic neurochemical studies of central and peripheral biogenic amine receptors and theoretical discussions of classification, genetics, and diagnosis. The major emphasis, however, is on new pharmacological therapies. There are reports of new clinical trials of established medications, as well as new drugs, such as alprazolam, fluvoxamine, toloxatane, verapamil, sulpiride, and fenotatine.

Almost all the papers are concise and highly technical, reporting a large amount of data. This will appeal to those readers who want to make up their own minds about whether conclusions are warranted from the data presented. Despite their complexity, the papers are well edited and readable. Some of them have extensive introductions reviewing the background for these studies, which readers new to the field will find useful.

Overall this is a well written, well edited and well presented book covering many of the most exciting areas of biological psychiatry. At £26.00 it represents very good value.

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Medical Mimics of Psychiatric Disorders. Edited by I. EXTEIN and M. S. GOLD. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press. 1986. Pp 198. \$15.95.

This little book is part of a *Progress in psychiatry* series, each volume of which contains texts based on the papers of a selected American Psychiatric Association conference symposium. Its first two chapters, on "the psychiatrist as physician" and on neurological screening, promote careful physical examination supplemented by the comprehensive battery of investigations more fashionable in the US than here. Physical disorders are seen as diagnostic alternatives to psychiatric disease, and the psychosomatic dimension virtually ignored.

The section on seizure disorders, which takes up almost a third of the book, explores in detail the kindling model as an explanation for the behavioural manifestations of epilepsy and for the efficacy of ECT and anticonvulsants in affective disorder. Briefer chapters on hypothyroidism and on the HPA axis describe clearly, if unexcitingly, the abnormalities of neuroendocrine function found in depression, but with scant discussion of why these associations should occur.

Perhaps most interesting is the editors' contribution exploring the neurotransmitter receptor changes under-