

describes how the research evidence that women are capable of being strongly aroused by erotica is inconsistent with the lack of interest shown by women in purchasing it, and suggests some interesting reasons for this. In an important and well-documented chapter linking sex and aggression, Edward Nelson describes how some forms of erotica act to inhibit aggression while others facilitate it; this finding has obvious theoretical implications. In putting the general debate in its historical context, Martin Roth describes the recent and unprecedented trend towards novel and deviant themes in pornography; one survey shows that rapes in popular novels have doubled over an eight year period. But Jonathan Miller tries to put the whole controversy into perspective by arguing that the harmful effects of pornography are probably less than those of, say, smoking. Altogether this book provides a nicely balanced mixture of opinion and fact covering the many aspects of erotica and its effects on us.

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**Time and the Inner Future: A Temporal Approach to Psychiatric Disorders.** By F. T. MELGES. New York: John Wiley. 1982. Pp 365. £25.35

Time is a dimension where angels fear to tread. The behavioural sciences have not yet achieved major success in their effort to adopt time as an operative category; psychiatry the least. The problem is one of deciding at what level in the theoretical order of each discipline the temporal dimension is better taken advantage of. For time can serve amongst other things as an epistemological category; a biophysical variable; a diagnostic parameter; and, most of all as the very tissue of all internal experiences.

Professor Melges' book touches upon all these levels but its main thrust is directed at the clinical and introspective aspects of time. The first part of the book reviews psychological work in which time features as an important variable; the second studies time in relation to clinical assessment and management. Parts three, four and five deal with the role played by time in the diagnostic process and in the subjective experience of patients suffering from neuroses and psychoses. This section, probably the best in the book, draws on the author's important research on the subject. The final chapter on "Future oriented Psychotherapy" summarizes Dr Melges' view on how to help "People to synthesize and organize their personal strivings".

This book is packed with information and reads well; only occasionally it becomes anthological and allows

the argument to meander. This minor stylistic difficulty is more a reflection of the opaqueness of the topic in question than of the author's intellectual courage. For courage is the term that comes to mind most readily when reading a book which the author wrote while going through a severe personal crisis.

It is not a book to recommend for inclusion in the *College Reading List* but most certainly the right one to give as a present to any seasoned campaigner or to a colleague in search of a challenging research topic.

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**Youth in Transit.** By LESLIE J. FRANCIS. Aldershot, Hampshire: Gower Publishing. 1983. Pp 189. No price stated.

This book offers an intriguing but ultimately unsatisfying snapshot of a group of 16–25 year olds, who are members of London Central YMCA. The information was collected via a self-completed, closed questionnaire, and a response rate of 57 per cent was obtained, a total of 1,085 completed questionnaires.

The young people emerge as hardworking and serious (earnest, even), and reflect many traditional values for example, the importance of saving money and owning a house. There is a real concern with the society in which they live and which they see as getting worse—almost three-quarters are concerned about the risk of nuclear war, and over two-thirds about the poverty of the third world. At a more individual level, young people worry about their work, debts, relationships and health.

Women are more legally conforming but less censorious on the moral dimension, and they mirror older women in being politically conservative. Both the unemployed and new arrivals in Britain seemed particularly vulnerable to the 1980's inner city life. The long-term unemployed were relatively dissatisfied with their lives, lonelier, more depressed and more likely to have contemplated suicide. Similar feelings were expressed by those who had been in Britain for less than 5 years. Both groups were relatively active politically, and likely to support radical policies, whilst being sceptical about the mainstream political parties. Another group with high levels of dissatisfaction and depression were those in bedsitters or living alone.

Superficially, the study answers a lot of the questions which begin "What percentage of young people think . . .?" However, the interpretation of the answers is problematic, with difficulties in separating cause and effect. For example, do people become lonely because

they live in bedsits, or do those who are lonely tend to live alone and in isolation? Moreover, the data are not handled as imaginatively as they might be. The tables are one-dimensional, and do not focus on sub-groups—for example, those who are particularly at-risk. A range of cross-tabulations is needed.

The result is a rather boring description of young people, not a study which attempts to explain, understand or recommend change. In the post-script, Leslie Francis explains that he has not written any conclusions in order to avoid pre-empting “the readers’ creative work of organisation and interpretation”. Unfortunately, this feels like a cop-out, and an abdication of the researcher’s responsibilities, rather than a preservation of the reader’s open mind.

Finally, there remains the YMCA’s image. Apparently the YMCA are at pains to point out that they are open to everyone aged 16 years and above, to women as well as men and to non-Christians. This seems to render three-quarters of their name counterproductive. Why, then, don’t they change it?

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**Children of Depressed Parents: Risk Identification and Intervention.** Edited by HELEN L. MORRISON. New York: Grune and Stratton. 1983. Pp 296. \$29.50.

In this book, a number of American writers review a topic which is (or should be) of concern to both adult and child psychiatrists.

In the best chapter, Weissman reports her study (with Paykel) of parental and adolescent adjustment during and after an episode of maternal depression. Her comments are sensitive and sensible. In other chapters, Grunebaum *et al* emphasise the role of the spouse; and Cohler *et al* indicate that the children of depressed mothers may be at greater risk of adjustment problems than those of schizophrenics.

Despite the book’s title, the criteria for intervention remain inadequately discussed. Grunebaum *et al* write of “immunising the child against the influence of parental distortions” and of “psychiatric assistance on a continuous basis”. However, Bemmesderfer and Cohler report equivocal results from an intensive rehabilitation programme; and Cohler *et al* rightly point to the remarkable resilience of many children. Chapters by Anthony, and by Fisher and Kokes, refer to their own studies, but are curiously reluctant to give much detail; and those by Lubinsky (on genetic method) and Greenberg and Silverstein (reviewing cognitive therapy in adults) are interesting, but almost

completely irrelevant to the central issue. For a short book, there is a surprising amount of “padding”.

The better chapters are clearly written, the weaker are more pretentious. French repeatedly refers to “potholes in the road of life (P.I.R.Ls)”, which “challenge the organism’s adaptive capacity”, giving rise to “P.I.R.L.—incurred trauma—and to the mixing of many metaphors. The present reviewer remains obtuse about “differentiation from the symbiotic orbit” and “the biologic principle of repetition as an ideologic mechanism”; but he was chuckling for a week at “ventral contact” to describe a cuddle or hug!

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**The Delinquent: Directions for Social Control.** By MASUD HOGHUGH. London: Burnett Books. 1983. Pp 317. £15.00.

Such statements as “Research on crime is only one aspect of a large industry which exists on and is parasitic to crime” and with professionals ‘much of their expertise is of the emperor’s clothes variety’ are in this book. Included among the ‘professionals’ are policemen, judges, lawyers, community workers, social workers, and prison officers. Psychiatrists are unnamed but implied.

It was written by the principal of a regional centre for assessment and treatment of seriously disordered and delinquent youngsters with two books on a similar theme to his credit. The aim is to guide our thinking and actions towards minimising the costly impact of crime among the young through a more rigorous application of our present resources. The author is also described as an academic and has done considerable research in various aspects of delinquency.

It is in three parts. The first deals with the context of control and the concept of delinquency. This part would be of great help to anyone wishing to review the literature on delinquency. In part two, parents, teachers, peer groups, police and community workers are described as agents of the control systems. Their method of functioning is described and suggestions for improvement made. In part three methods of control are examined and assessed, these are discussed under the heading of preventive, punitive and treatment options. The epilogue poses the question “What should we do?” and attempts to weave together the various strands of thought produced over fourteen chapters. The central thesis is that at present there is both the manpower and the resources to reduce juvenile crime to a tolerable level. What is needed is increased insight on the part of parents, teachers,