

1984 Year Book of Psychiatry and Applied Mental Health. Edited by DANIEL X. FREEDMAN, JOHN A. TALBOTT, REGINALD S. LOURIE, HERBERT Y. MELTZER, JOHN C. NEMIAH and HERBERT WEINER. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific. 1984. Pp 439. £34.50.

The seventeen sections in this volume embrace most aspects of psychiatry. Each contains summaries of the selected articles and cover the period up to June, 1983. A wide range of journals are tapped but, inevitably, the main source is those published in the United States and, to a much lesser degree, in the United Kingdom. The success of the book turns on the selection of articles and the need to give them some coherence. A summary alone is not enough to assess an article's value and so the Editor's comments (as is his choice) are crucial. The result varies from a useful introduction and comments after the summaries to a much more limited editorial input. Five sections are substantial; others are very brief.

A lengthy section deals with biological psychiatry and covers a broad range of the subject with special emphasis on recent experimental work. Professor Lourie has produced an informative section on child and adolescent psychiatry. He casts his net wide to include family dynamics, suicide, anorexia, child abuse, childhood psychoses and all is given point by his lively and perceptive comments. Thirty-four pages are devoted to psychotherapy and, again, this section is illuminated by Professor Nemiah's, refreshing views. Topics cover such usual ones as evaluations, selection of patients and changing practice but also include the use of behavioural techniques and social management of schizophrenia.

Another weighty section deals with psychopharmacology. Articles on the relative merits of anti-depressants add little that is new. A series of studies on the toxic effects of lithium carbonate are valuable and the studies on the treatment of resistant depressive illness, if somewhat anecdotal because of the small numbers cited, arouses interest. The continuing use of ECT is reflected by the six articles on technique and side-effects.

The longest section in the book, edited by Professor Kolb, concerns community psychiatry and is very relevant to British readers. There are the usual subjects of epidemiology, long-term studies and the relevance of family dynamics to illness but there are also articles on the planning of new mental health services. These include manpower needs, how to assess change in terms of patient pathology and also economic issues. The potential weakness

of "community care" is well covered. Professor Kolb's comments give an overall coherence to this area. Such articles are pertinent to our own current position in giving some pointers to the inherent problems of new patterns of care and how to evaluate such changes. The United States has now been immersed in this process for two decades. It is interesting to find the term 'recidivism' being applied to patients who repeatedly relapse and require hospital readmission.

A book such as this falls between two stools. A research worker will find more up-to-date and complete information by computer searches. A clinician who wishes to keep abreast of new developments may well find it easier to read a review essay which incorporates significant new work. This book is much more of a lucky dip, with a variable result due to different editors and presentation. There are some nuggets and, no doubt, readers will set their own value on specific articles.

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Art as Therapy. An Introduction to the Use of Art as a Therapeutic Technique. Edited by TESSA DALLEY. London: Tavistock Publications. 1984. Pp. 209. £13.50, £6.95 (paperback).

The history of art therapy is a short one. In the last decade it has risen from the status of being merely an adjunct of the Occupational Therapy Department to being a specific form of therapy in its own right. Drawing and painting are two of the very earliest forms of childhood expression. If therapy is designed to reach these areas then it seems logical that art has a very real place in all dynamic therapy. The pictures themselves form a dialogue between the conscious and unconscious and may be seen as analogous to the position of dreams.

This introduction to the use of art as a therapeutic technique presents, in a series of clearly expressed articles, the manner in which art may be used directly; not merely as a diagnostic method, but be integrated within any dynamic therapy.

It is not merely concerned with its application in child therapy, important as that has always seen to be, but covers examples ranging from prison settings to the treatment of anorexia. It concludes with an examination of the training available and the aims of such training.

A vital contribution to the field of therapy.

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