endocrine, immune and neuropeptide functioning. However, as Rossi turns his rather selective summaries to justify how subtle appeals to unconscious processes should have profound physical and psychological effects, scientifically literate readers may not always be persuaded by his conclusions.

Repeatedly, review chapters offer a framework that lends Rossi's techniques some plausibility, only to stop tantalisingly short of direct evidence that a physiological change accompanies a specific clinical observation. The most telling gap is a failure to substantiate Rossi's claim that psychosomatic complaints all reflect suppression of an innate pattern of ultradian rhythms. This is reiterated through the book, and much of his argument is made to depend upon it. It really won't do.

The book seems to fail in other ways because it attempts too much. With the scientific case unproven, Rossi still offers clinical instruction in his tecniques. While readers would be unwise to think that they have been through a complete course of practical instruction, the chapter's layout hardly deters them from doing so.

Despite its shortcomings and partisanship, the book ranges over many important topics in a lucid style. It has been enthusiastically received by existing admirers of the author's work. More sceptical buyers beware! Yet readers nurturing an interest in the psychology of dissociation or physiologically informed models of psychosomatic disorder may decide that, within a curiously arid field, any fresh water is welcome, and to investigate a book that does score highly on enterprise.

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**Introduction to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Technique.** By SARAH FELS USHER. Madison, US: International Universities Press. 1993. 163 pp. US$27.50 (hb).

The author of this book is a psychologist in private practice in Canada. The book fulfils its title well, and serves as a useful pilot for the psychiatric trainee beginning to see patients for dynamic psychotherapy. It answers most of the questions that trainees might be too embarrassed or naïve to ask about, and offers basic advice that experienced fellow trainees and supervisors may omit to give.

It is a compact volume, easy and quick to read, and written in a didactic but accessible style. Various aspects of psychotherapy are discussed, such as: basic psychodynamic concepts; how to handle the initial interviews and take a history; processes of selection of patients suitable for psychodynamic psychotherapy; how to manage ongoing therapy; how to deal with terminating therapy; and how to handle common difficulties with patients. There is also a good working account of transference, how to detect it and cope with it, and when to offer interpretations, which will be of use for the beginner. Notably she includes a chapter on using supervision, which is the first I have seen in an introductory text and is especially valuable given the increasing emphasis placed on this activity in the training of British psychiatrists.

Simplicity is one of the strengths of this book, but is also a weakness; it is rather thin on explanations of fundamental concepts such as defence mechanisms, and the neophyte psychotherapist would need to refer to other introductory texts. Another limitation is that most of the references are from American texts which are not always easily available in British psychiatric libraries. The absence of any useful suggestions for further reading is a fault it shares with other introductory texts. Annoyingly, terms such as 'borderline' and 'narcissistic' are used without being defined, which could confuse the trainee.

When I was a junior SHO in psychiatry, I would have found this book very useful to read before embarking on giving long-term individual psychotherapy to patients, and I found the book a serviceable reminder of basic technique. The chapter on supervision alone makes it a worthwhile addition to any psychiatric library. I recommend this book to all psychiatric trainees to read, but one to borrow from a friend or library rather than buy.

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**Police Stress at Work.** By DAVID A. ALEXANDER, LESLIE G. WALKER, GEORGE INNES and BARRIE L. IRVING. London: The Police Foundation and the Department of Mental Health, University of Aberdeen. 1993. 165 pp. £24.50 (pb).

Forty-seven per cent of police have had to look at a mutilated body in the past eight weeks. Thirty-four per cent have been confronted with a person carrying an offensive weapon. Police are almost as likely to report that it is stressful being on duty at a football match as attending the scene of a serious road accident. These findings are some of the insights into police work provided by this detailed and comprehensive report of a survey of 1000 police officers in the Grampian region. It is not surprising to find marked degrees of strain, reflected in measures of anxiety, depression and absenteeism among the officers. What is perhaps more surprising is that it is not contact with the public which seems to cause particular problems, nor is it particular stressful incidents such as those above. More important is the general frustration of perceived unnecessary obstacles at work and fluctuations in workload. The authors suggest that it is therefore a mistake to place sole emphasis on medical and welfare services for

police under stress, without consideration of the organisational causes of stress.

This book describes a very large study which looks at the occurrence and perceived effects of a wide range of recognised work stressors (such as overload and physical danger), various specific aspects of police work (such as shift work and the risk of contracting AIDS), and the occurrence of specific stressful incidents. The survey included measures of coping strategies (e.g. 29% of police admit at times to coping with stress by taking it out on the public), job satisfaction, mental health, smoking, drinking, and personality. Spouses of officers completed shorter forms which showed that the work affects officers' home lives. Smaller surveys of fire officers, psychiatric nurses and prison officers allowed detailed comparisons.

The study provides a great deal of detail about the work of the police and its effects on officers at different levels. Unfortunately, the presentation represents an uneasy compromise between accessibility to the general reader and scientific rigour. The sheer number of detailed relationships between variables makes the study hard going, despite attempts to minimise presentation of statistics. While a study like this is undoubtedly valuable in highlighting important issues and relationships between stressors and strains, it would be nice to see greater consideration of the methodological problems of stress research. One such problem is that of establishing the direction of causation in cross-sectional survey findings. For example, the study reports that the occurrence of specific incidents is less frequently related to anxiety than other aspects of work such as perceived frustration due to unnecessary obstacles. The study cannot rule out the possibility that this finding is the result of pre-existing anxiety causing officers to perceive their work as frustrating, whereas anxiety is not likely to cause them to report an incident such as attending a road accident.

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**Dementia.** Edited by ALISTAIR BURNS and RAYMOND LEVY. London: Chapman & Hall Medical. 1993. 874 pp. £125.00 (hb).

Synoptic texts on dementia now abound, and this may be the biggest so far. It is attractively produced, with a pleasant typeface and wide margins, the pages fall open easily, and it is possible to lift it with one hand – features by no means to be taken for granted in big books. The contents rate highly by the sort of sampling that is all a reviewer can give to a megatext. There are over 80 contributors, many of them "household names", and there are some very good chapters by some who aren't. There are plenty of 1991 references and a few 1992s, but apolipoprotein testing was big news only in 1993, so it doesn't feature. The book is about as up-to-date as a giant text can be, and it is a big task well done. But do we need a big book like this?

This volume would have been inconceivable 20 years ago; it is a tribute to the growth of dementia studies, and a celebration of what has been achieved by the early 1990s in understanding this commonplace and terrible disease. Alongside the well-tackled standard topics, there is praiseworthy discussion of often less well-handled and sometimes overlooked matters in the field of care, and of questions of competence to manage one's affairs, or to drive a car. Ethics is touched upon, but it would have been useful to have a separate chapter bringing together the many strands of that big topic. The Court of Protection isn't mentioned because the relevant chapter is American, which illustrates the conflict between a bid for an international readership and the reader's need for locally practical information. Enduring power of attorney (or even power of attorney) doesn't appear in the index, although "durable power of attorney" is mentioned in the text (but not explained). The less common dementias are dealt with well, and there are beautiful coloured pictures of SPET and PET scans.

A review of current knowledge between two covers is always attractive; such a book is reassuring to have "on the shelf", and what it doesn't explain, it may lead to through its references. The editors are at the centre of their field, and the book is well planned. Editorial control is good, but the editors should have been fiercer with some highly technical contributions – how many readers will cope with the chapter on molecular pathology? Try opening it at around p. 214. The first page of each chapter looks like the first page of a reprint, reiterating the publication details and thereby conceding that such a text is inevitably a collection from which people will select individual pieces. A rolling add-on publication rather than a huge and costly book could thus be more useful, and more up-to-date, and would allow the user to take what he or she needs.

Are such huge, and never quite up-to-date, multi-author books still appropriate? If they are not, it is a tribute to the rapid growth of knowledge. If they are, it suggests that, while knowledge may be growing fast, not much that is very new is of great significance. How often will I take my copy off the shelf? Perhaps the publishers might give a discount to readers who undertake to log each time such a book is opened, and over how many years. This would tell whether its value is in the reassurance which its presence gives, or in actual day-to-day usefulness.

I found nothing in the book with which to quarrel seriously. Predictably, Levy is bullish on the "cholinergic approach" to drug treatment, believing it likely that cholinergic drugs which give "worthwhile symptomatic improvement in about 40% of mildly and moderately affected cases of uncomplicated