

with an excellent reference to the recent and the past psychiatric literature. The arguments are objective and supported by scientific research. The subject of race and culture in psychiatry is a vast one and it is a credit to the author to condense the subject into a very readable book of 200 pages. I found the first and second chapters informative, and the rest of the book depends on an understanding of the history of psychiatry, history of racism and resistance to change within psychiatry towards race and culture. The book attempts to dissect various aspects of psychiatry including research, publications, professional appointments and various bodies such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists in relation to race and culture.

Race and culture are sensitive subjects and many would like to deny their existence, especially in clinical psychiatry. This book is an eye-opener, however intimidating it might be to the reader. I recommend it to all professionals in psychiatry.

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Cults and the New Religious Movements: A Report to the American Psychiatric Association from the Committee on Psychiatry and Religion. Edited by MARC GALANTER. Washington: APA. 1989. 346 pp. £30.00.

This volume is the culmination of a three-year project designed to prepare a comprehensive report on the contemporary phenomenon of cults and new religious movements. It was undertaken by the Committee on Psychiatry and Religion and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) at the request of the Board of Trustees of the APA. It contains 16 major contributions from authors who tackle the problem from a variety of angles. While bearing in mind that the whole report is basically concerned with the North American scene, and some of the articles are concerned with North American law, it does present a very rounded view of some of the problems with which we are often faced in the UK. (The English situation is more fully, yet also more one-sidedly, expounded by Barker in *New Religious Movements*, HMSO, 1989.)

I would advise readers to begin with chapter 12 in which Richardson analyses the research methodology which has been adopted, the impact of the type of information gathered and the conclusions drawn from it. He points out that the researcher's perspective and discipline influence, if not dictate, the methods used to gather information. He demonstrates the variety of bias which accompanies research into such an emotive matter. This helps us to understand how many of the chapters arrive at almost opposite conclusions.

He also compares the cults with the process of psychotherapy, especially in regard to its non-specific elements. I found this a fascinating challenge when considering some of the new 'cults' of psychotherapy. Perhaps that is the next symposium which might attract the APA.

In chapter 16, Bromley & Shupe remind us of the fact that many of the present day conventional religious bodies have at one time been the object of varying degrees of controversy and violent opposition.

While I did not find this report very enlightening as to the individual cults themselves, I am sure that it would be a very important resource for those who may have to care for the parents of cult members or those cult members who have become disillusioned with their particular movement. It seems that many do so.

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Offending Women: Female Lawbreakers and the Criminal Justice System. By ANNE WORRAL. London: Routledge. 1989. 189 pp. £9.99.

The tone of this polemical book is set in the author's first paragraph where "the psychiatrist says she may suffer from epilepsy . . . and he may look into it." The author's outrage detracts from the book's message; as, for example, when she says that her book's aim is "to examine the ways in which authorisation of professionals and experts to define certain women as being the type of women who require treatment, management, control or punishment serves to perpetuate the oppression of all women."

Before moving onto the cases of 15 women "chosen (to) provide compelling illustrations of (or challenges to) my theoretical positions", one must wade through two tightly argued but impenetrable chapters which purport to define these positions.

The case descriptions are of some interest but occupy only 15 pages and relate to only 11 interviewed subjects. Regrettably, there are no full descriptions which enable one to ascertain whether these cases support or challenge the author's positions.

The next chapters cover interviews with magistrates, lawyers, six psychiatrists and probation officers. That relating to psychiatry is little more than a reiteration of well founded and well known complaints: that psychiatrists may use the medical model inappropriately, that they may claim expertise they do not possess, and that they may fail (negligently?) to deliver on promised treatment when there is a condition of probation. If the book had examined the role of credentialling, especially for psychiatrists, some of whom claim forensic expertise they do not possess, then it may have addressed its aim. Regrettably, the author's conversations with six psychiatrists are not interpreted in the light of the need for

training or standards (only two are forensic psychiatrists) but rather as evidence that these six misunderstand women offenders.

The book fails as a clear case study. More importantly, its methodological shortcomings mean that it fails in its expressed aim.

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Modern Perspectives in the Psychiatry of the Affective Disorders (Modern Perspectives in Psychiatry, Number 13). Edited by JOHN G. HOWELLS. USA: Brunner/Mazel Publishers. 1989. 440 pp. \$60.00.

Of all the topics chosen for the *Modern Perspectives in Psychiatry* series, affective disorder should provide the most rapidly ripening harvest. Each of the 38 contributors, chosen as experts in their field, offer much fact and theory, with a wide variation in depth of approach, theoretical framework and perspective. There is also a variety of tone which includes political worldliness, personal research and practical clinical wisdom.

The three section headings are "General topics", "Clinical syndromes" and "Management". The opening chapter on epidemiology of depression is fully comprehensive and concentrates on recent possible factors. Neurochemistry is covered in an excellent essay, giving realistic conclusions, but making a distinction between circadian rhythm disturbance and dysregulation as aetiological pathways. Important new areas are explored including the link between immunity and depression, and the role of thyroid function in the illness. Social psychiatry is reviewed broadly, concluding with an ideal for future psychiatric potential. The pronouncement of DSM-III-R seemed to cause as much concern as the status quo before this. No less than three chapters cover nosology, diagnosis and DSM-III in relation to affective states.

The clinical section focuses on the 'difficult' aspects such as schizoaffective states, atypical depression, post-natal depression and suicide in children and in adults, while mania, involuntional melancholia and bipolar affective disorder bring one back to more familiar clinical experiences. This section closes with an approach to prevention. Primary, secondary and tertiary levels are clearly described, but the wide range of possible interventions based on aetiology is not expanded here.

The management section includes firm practical advice on drug treatment and, separately, on psychotherapy including its limitations and the importance of assessing physical factors as well. A review of the association between tardive dyskinesia and affective disorder deals with important risk factors which should be widely noted. A chapter on the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is excellently summarised, the techniques being

particularly well described. Its practical value is enhanced by the inclusion of drug interactions often overlooked. The concluding chapter is a welcome 'hands on' guide to enhancing the therapeutic effect of antidepressants with the addition of lithium.

This work includes most of psychiatry's many disciplines. Consequently, perspective and focus must be adjusted periodically, although movement through the chapters remains smooth. This gives the book a distinct advantage – even when read straight through, it never loses its capacity to appeal, to stimulate or to 'update'.

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Familial Alzheimer's Disease – Molecular Genetics and Clinical Perspectives. Edited by GARY D. MILNER, RALPH RICHTER, JOHN P. BLASS, JIMMIE L. VALENTINE and LINDA A. WINTERS-MINER. New York & Basel: Marcel Dekker Inc. 1989. 444 pp. \$150.00.

The origin of this book is not made clear in the preface, although there is a suggestion that it is part of the proceedings of the first international symposium on familial Alzheimer's disease held in Tulsa in 1987. If the book is the product of this meeting, it is better than the usual conference proceedings. The papers are of a high standard and are sufficiently long to provide some background, explain advances in technique, and discuss methodological problems in a particularly clear way. Most of the papers review the work of others as well as giving original data, and they include an extensive bibliography.

The book is divided into four parts: background of familial Alzheimer's disease and clinical perspective; molecular genetics of Alzheimer's disease; promising new avenues of research; and overview and directions for the future.

The first two parts of the book, which deal with genetics and molecular pathology, are particularly good and are concerned with familial Alzheimer's disease alone. The chapter on genetic heterogeneity is especially good. In part three there is less emphasis on familial Alzheimer's disease, and a number of chapters refer instead to senile dementia of the non-familial type (e.g. the chapter on methionine-enkephalin). Part four contains a fascinating account of the complex organisation set up by a Canadian multidisciplinary team to establish a register of Alzheimer's disease in a defined area. It details the steps taken to identify possible cases as well as documenting their investigation and follow-up up to and including post-mortem.

The book concludes with an appendix containing a research bibliography of familial Alzheimer's disease. This shows the expansion in publications from 1907 to 1988 and belies Khachaturian's statement, in his chapter on "New challenges in Alzheimer's disease