

It is refreshingly unusual these days to be sent a single author book to review. Even in a scholarly and scientific work such as this, the reader can gauge something of the man behind the words. Giaquinto emerges from these pages as widely read in arts and science, a humane man committed equally to research and to improving the welfare of elderly people. I should be happy to be his patient were the need to arise.

ROBIN JACOBY, *Consultant Psychiatrist, The Maudsley Hospital, London*

The New Harvard Guide to Psychiatry. Edited by ARMAND M. NICHOLI Jr. London: Harvard University Press. 1988. 865 pp. £31.95.

This volume is the successor, 10 years on, to the highly respected *Harvard Guide to Modern Psychiatry*. It is a compendium of 36 complementary review articles of aspects of modern psychiatry by 42 distinguished contributors from or connected with the Harvard Medical School. The information that these were selected from 1800 members of the Harvard Psychiatric Department arouses a certain envy.

The contents are divided into six parts. Part 1, 'Examination and evaluation', deals with the assessment of patients and the classification of their disordered mental states. Noteworthy chapters here are 'The therapist-patient relationship' (Nicholi) and 'Classification and DSM-III-R' (Klerman). It is a sign of the times that the former devotes so much space to sexual relationships.

Part 2, 'Brain and behaviour', contains four weighty chapters by acknowledged experts: Mesulam on neuropsychiatry; Green, Money & Schildkraut on the biochemistry of affective disorders; Kety & Matthysse on genetic and biochemical aspects of schizophrenia; and Hartmann on sleep.

Part 3, 'Psychopathology', covers the usual textbook syndromes but with some additional chapters on less common topics such as 'Theories of personality' (Meissner) and eating disorders (Herzog). Chapters on defence mechanisms (Vaillant) and 'The psychodynamic basis of psychopathology' (Nemiah) emphasise the eclectic tone of the book.

Part 4, on principles of treatment and management, covers the whole spectrum from the psychotherapies through behaviour therapy, sex therapy, and chemotherapy to ECT, but not as far as psychosurgery. A final chapter on patient management (Sifneos & Greenberg) provides valuable insight into the tricks of the trade of clinical psychiatry.

Part 5, 'Special Populations', covers some important but neglected areas of clinical practice, including 'The person with chronic mental illness' (Gudeman) and 'The person confronting death' (Cassem). Both provide a rich source of advice, based on long experience, on how to manage these difficult situations, and it is gratifying to

find the needs of patients' families receiving due attention. This section places the guide in a class of its own, beyond the average textbook.

Part 6, 'Psychiatry and society', deals with epidemiology (Tsuang, Tohen & Murphy), community psychiatry (Borus), and 'Psychiatry and the law' (Stone). The legal chapter is naturally concerned with the American experience, but the principles are universal.

This is an excellent volume, best suited for browsing and reference purposes. Each chapter is comprehensive and up-to-date, fully referenced, and with suggested additional reading. The style is lucid and refreshingly jargon-free, and there is a notable absence of the fashionable but destructive polarisation of the dynamic and the biological. The prevailing theme is one of scholarship in the service of clinical practice, with patients' needs at the centre of attention. It will be a useful addition to all libraries, and many individuals will also appreciate its excellent value for money.

From one stable perhaps, but a stable of thoroughbreds!

KENNETH DAVISON, *Consultant Psychiatrist, Newcastle General Hospital; Lecturer, Department of Psychiatry, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*

Beginning Child Psychiatry. Edited by PAUL L. ADAMS and IVAN FRAS. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1988. 620 pp. \$50.00.

What should a book for beginners be like? This one starts with a chapter on interviewing and examination, outlines the major treatment options, and goes on to describe all the childhood psychiatric disorders in DSM-III-R one chapter at a time. Sections on the child as a family member, being victimised, emergencies, and professional issues complete the book. As an appendix, there is an interesting chronology of child psychiatry going back to 5000 BC! The authors have chosen to present their own clinical practice rather than review the literature (although key references are cited). This makes for a clear and coherent view of child psychiatry, albeit as practised by the authors, which, together with numerous case examples and an easy to read style, will make the book readily accessible to beginners and give them a feel for the subject.

This would be all very well in a slim, introductory volume, but this book is over 600 pages long. In choosing to go for a coherent view of clinical practice the authors have, I believe, missed opportunities to cover certain areas in more detail and glossed over other areas of controversy. This need not have been necessary in a book of such length. The lack of a separate section on aetiology means that it is discussed briefly and often repetitively in each chapter. The complex interactions between constitutional, family, and environmental factors are not given a full airing. The chapter on