

practitioners dealing with addiction problems. In contrast, the chapter on "Psychiatric problems" lacks depth and useful framework. Part 4, "Preventive issues", is rather patchy on prevention but finishes with a chapter, "Drugs and the law", which admirably, and almost single handedly, takes on the stated brief of offering a practical guide.

In summary, this is a competent text rather more for the professional within the field than the non-specialist. It is disappointing in that the combined experience and talent of the authors is capable of producing something much better. As often happens with multiple authorship there is irritating overlap and a failure to excite the reader with a clear direction and approach. I think it is also disappointing that the target readership are unlikely to find this the practical guide that was promised.

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The Workplace Within: Psychodynamics of Organisational Life. By LARRY HIRSCHHORN. Massachusetts: MIT Press. 1988. 265 pp. £8.95.

In this book the author develops a psychodynamic concept of work life by linking his consulting experience in organisations to a theory of work in post-industrial society. He argues that in a post-industrial setting it is increasingly difficult to maintain group cohesion while remaining open to influence and information from outside the group. Social defences, which may involve processes such as splitting, projection and introjection, are acknowledged as a means of containing such anxiety.

Routines and structures are developed by organisations to handle uncertainty. Hirschhorn suggests that because classical organisation theorists have not linked the experience of uncertainty in the organisation to the individual's feelings of anxiety, they have posed the issue of an organisation's uncertainty too narrowly and have then proposed solutions that rely on such rational methods as mathematical calculation and organisational design. When anxiety intrudes, rational processes are distorted by irrational processes.

As the anxiety at work grows, people need to project their sense of persecution onto others. By using Klein's theory of reparation in the workplace, the production of valued goods and services for others provides a framework for repairing relationships. Industrial society makes reparation difficult by conflating the good or the ideal with the symbol of a punishing authority, by substituting guilt for shame and by confusing limitation with sin. This constellation leads to emphasising triumphs over others. Hirschhorn argues that society has reached cultural, technical and ecological limits in its capacity to sustain the psychodynamics of triumph.

To acknowledge the new, integrated complexity of a post-industrial world, people may need to understand

how society as a whole values the goods and services it produces.

This thought-provoking book is ambitious in that it addresses work both at a personal level and in the wider context of society. It is clearly written for a wide audience with respect for the reader who is invited to take up the interpretive method where the author's explanations seem incorrect or incomplete. It is an interesting book which deserves to be widely read.

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Why Children Reject School: Views from Seven Countries. Edited by COLETTE CHILAND and J. GERALD YOUNG. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1990. 229 pp. £25.00.

This is the 10th volume in the series "The Child in His Family, The Yearbook of the International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions". It was produced for the 12th International Congress of the International Association, held in Japan in 1990.

The emphasis is on absence from school. There is an excellent review of school refusal by Lionel Hersov, and a good review of school attendance problems more generally by Richard Landsdown, although he gets the Leeds Truancy Project wrong: it was children taken to court there not parents. The final chapter by J. Gerald Young and others is well worth looking at; I was particularly pleased to be reminded that haloperidol can sometimes induce symptoms of school refusal, or work refusal in adults, and that there is evidence for depressive symptoms occurring secondary to a variety of childhood disorders, not just school refusal.

The five chapters from Japan provide an interesting, although somewhat peripheral, introduction to the particular problems children there experience in response to their competitive educational system; school refusal in Japan is less characterised by difficulties separating from the family than it is in Western countries. The book also gives one a fascinating glimpse of German, Danish and Brazilian approaches. The three chapters written by eminent child psychiatrists in France were more concerned to restate psychoanalytic views than to provide information on absence from school in that country, although Colette Chiland's detailed description of the French education system is of interest.

I do not know how many good chapters are needed to make a book of this sort worth buying, either for yourself or for a library. Although there are some very interesting contributions, I suspect this book will mainly be for reference.

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