

the gathering of evidence by the police. The seminar will be addressed by Professor Martin Orne of the University of Pennsylvania, who has made an extensive study of this matter, and who has advised the Supreme Courts of more than one American state.

The practice of hypnotizing witnesses, victims and even defendants is now widespread in the USA, and it is spreading to other countries, including Britain. It has raised a host of legal and ethical problems. In some states of the USA police officers are being trained to use hypnosis, and this has led to a resolution by the International Society of Hypnosis that the official use of hypnosis should be restricted to professionally trained people within the academic and clinical disciplines represented in that body. In some places the police use the services of self-styled 'experts', sometimes people who have rather minimal qualifications and who have somewhat naive concepts of how memory can be enhanced by hypnosis. The problems of confabulation, fantasy and suggestion contaminating the evidence which may later be given in court are obvious, and some eminent authorities in forensic psychology and psychiatry would ban the practice of hypnosis in this context altogether. Not least among the problems is the ambiguity as to whether hypnosis has any power at all to revivify accurate memory, other than by removing pathological amnesic blocks where they exist.

The British Home Office is taking the sensible view that it should bring together experts in a number of related fields to initiate an informed debate, before issuing any definite guidance to the various police forces of this country, and they have sought my assistance to this end. Attendance at the

seminar in September will be by personal invitation, and I should therefore be glad to hear from people who are interested and feel that their qualifications are relevant.

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Chairman

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Audio-Visual Sub-Committee

DEAR SIR,

The Audio-Visual Sub-Committee is concerned about the relative lack of tape-slide teaching programmes on all aspects of psychiatry compared to other specialties and would like to draw attention to the facilities offered by the Graves Medical Audio-Visual Library for the making and distribution of such programmes.

Dr Valerie Graves, the Honorary Medical Director, will assist in the making of slides and the tape recording if necessary, any expenses are met, and there is a fee of £50 representing advance royalties. Further royalties may be earned later and the producer is given a copy for his own use.

If any members of the College are prepared to offer programmes of not more than thirty minutes on any subject of value to trainees, I would be grateful if they would get in touch with myself in the first instance.

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Reviews

Critical Psychiatry: The Politics of Mental Health.
Edited by David Ingleby. 1981. Penguin Books.
£2.95.

They asked me for a sympathetic review—'we ought to know what these anti-psychiatrists are up to, perhaps we have something to learn'—and indeed I approached the book with hope. I am all for critical examination of our assumptions, practices and relations with others, and trying to do better in future: and a political approach could be refreshing. Ingleby has been based in the Cambridge Psychological Laboratory for nine years or so, and he has contributed just under a third of this 200-page book. The other seven contributors include another psychologist, three sociologists, and three psychiatrists. One of the psychiatrists (F. Basaglia) is already well known—see Roth's paper on 'Psychiatry and its Critics' in *British Journal of Psychiatry*,

122, 373 (1973). His account here of closing down a mental hospital in Trieste and moving mental health services into the community is unfortunately too sketchy and lacking in factual information for us to see how it differs from the many other attempts at the same thing in other countries, for example the work of Scott at Napsbury, and one gets nothing from it. Hangsgjerd from Norway is an analyst who is also a Marxist, and he devotes part of his chapter to 'the most important recent political event in the mental health field . . . the struggle against the Common Market.' There is a chapter also on French anti-psychiatry (by an American sociologist), from which it appears that some psycho-analytical groups are more Marxist than others. Indeed, let us be frank and get it out of the way: the 'Politics' of the title is narrower than I hoped, and really means Marxism. I didn't find these foreign contributions in any way enlightening, partly for a reason I shall come to later, and it seemed to me