

analysed and presented in an easily understandable style. The book covers a range of topics, from biological and genetic information, through medical issues, including pain management to financial issues for sufferers and support for their families. The authors have integrated clinical medical information with information on, and opinions about, social and cultural aspects of the condition, and the effects of social attitudes on sufferers and their families. They have brought together an extensive variety of issues in a manner which renders the book both a useful text for practitioners and a basis for people wishing to delve further into the implications of the problems that beset sufferers of the disease and those who carry the sickle cell trait.

The book is both down to earth and sufficiently erudite and 'research-based' to appeal to a wide readership. However, it does have the slight drawback that the discerning reader may need to pick and choose from among the varied chapters, depending on his or her own background and knowledge. Psychiatrists and psychologists need to have a grasp of the sort of problems covered in this book, and I recommend this book for departmental libraries, especially those serving areas with multi-ethnic populations.

SUMAN FERNANDO, *Mental Health Unit, Enfield Community Care NHS Trust, Chase Farm Hospital, Enfield, Middlesex*

**Foundations of Clinical Psychiatry.** Edited by SIDNEY BLOCH and BRUCE SINGH. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press. 1994. 472 pp. Aust \$49.95 (pb).

This book is aimed at students of medicine and other health sciences. It is divided into four broad sections: "An approach to psychiatry", "The range of psychiatric disorders", "Special clinical areas" and "Treatment". Both editors are respected writers and clinicians and have produced this book as a result of collaboration between two university departments of psychiatry. Therein lies the first problem – what expertise do the individual contributors have in relation to their subject matter? On reading many of the chapters the answer must decidedly be "none". Unfortunately the editors themselves only contributed to three chapters. Presumably the contributors are members of the academic departments of varying degrees of seniority, although their biographical and academic details are not provided. As a result the book is readable and accessible but lacking in depth. Indeed, vague generalisations abound: "patients with personality disorder are commonly predisposed to major psychiatric illnesses such as psychosis or depression" and "this pattern of illness means that maintenance and prophylactic use of antipsychotics, lithium, antidepressants

and other forms of psychotropic medication, in various combinations, form the cornerstone of medium- to long-term management". More worrying are the frank inaccuracies, such as "ICD-10 does not require diagnoses to be made on the other axes which are included in the DSM-III-R classification".

The breadth of topics covered conforms fairly predictably to what a neophyte medical student might claim was relevant. Teachers of medical students will appreciate the limitations of this approach and most departments now include a much greater breadth of subject matter, including psychiatric aspects of physical illness, basic research techniques, and so on. Moreover, this text includes a chapter for the politically correct entitled "Psychiatry of women", and although it mentions various types of pregnancy loss, the emotional consequences of induced abortion (an area of increasing research and clinical interest) is not included. More basic omissions are the absence of discussion of depot neuroleptics or the management of resistant depression. The chapter most likely to be of relevance to a newly qualified doctor, on the assessment of parasuicide and suicidal intent, was skimpy in the extreme.

In spite of these shortcomings there were some excellent chapters, notably "The psychiatric interview" and "Making sense of the psychiatric patient", and these should be read by the initiate into psychiatric training. The suggested reading at the end of each chapter is also more appropriate for aspiring psychiatrists than medical students, although the enthusiastic student who delves into some of these works may be stimulated to investigate the speciality further. Ethical aspects of psychiatry are considered in the chapter on forensic psychiatry, and while their inclusion is welcome it is unfortunate that this had to be under the rubric of forensic psychiatry since the issues are broader than this.

I cannot recommend this book to the student doctor who is presently overwhelmed with a multiplicity of textbooks, many of which are as readable, more comprehensive and presented in a more interesting manner. This pedestrian text has entered a crowded market and I have no doubt that the market will quickly give its verdict.

PATRICIA CASEY, *Department of Psychiatry, Mater Hospital, Eccles Street, Dublin*

**The Neurological Boundaries of Reality.** Edited by E. M. R. CRITCHLEY. London: Farrand Press. 1994. 448 pp. £29.50 (hb).

Edmund Critchley, following in the footsteps of his illustrious uncle, MacDonald Critchley, has an interest in the borderlands of neurology; to paraphrase an advert, he reaches the parts that other neurologists

rarely reach. He has continued his interesting scientific publications with this collection of essays which, perhaps broadly, fall under the rubric of neurophilosophy. The contributors are philosophers, neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists and neuroscientists, a number of whom have already made substantial contributions to the expanding discipline of neurophilosophy.

The first few chapters consider perception, Critchley's own chapter covering perceptual disturbances such as synaesthesia. These are followed by chapters on consciousness. Central here is John Smythies' contribution clarifying the distinctions between theories of direct realism and those of representationalism, and bringing forward his own solution to the Cartesian dilemma which is based on a fuller understanding of distinctions between phenomenological space and physical space. There are chapters devoted more exclusively to philosophy, and then a pot-pourri of neuropsychiatric topics are covered, including hallucinations, delusions, hysteria, body image disturbances, and memory and language problems.

Although not all 429 pages of the text will interest every reader, this is certainly a good bedside book, and also one for the shelves for those important and often elusive references that those interested in the boundaries of neurology and psychiatry sometimes need.

It is a pleasure to find a book such as this, priced under £30, which has been so nicely produced.

MICHAEL R. TRIMBLE, *University Department of Clinical Neurology, National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Institute of Neurology, London*

**Helping Bereaved Children – A Handbook for Practitioners.** Edited by NANCY BOYD WEBB. New York: Guilford Press. 1993. 304 pp. £19.95 (hb).

There are a growing number of publications and books on grief and bereavement, and these areas are becoming subject to increasing research. Helping bereaved children requires special consideration. This book, edited by a professor of social work at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, Tarrytown, New York, is written (according to the editor) for two groups of professionals – those trained in mental health fields, and those trained in counselling.

The first part of the book considers the theoretical framework of understanding a child's views of death, and assessment principles. The second part looks at some of the different types of death which may occur in families (such as the suicidal death of mother, accidental sibling death, or terminal illness and death of a father). The third part of the book deals with death in the school and community (such

as the sudden death of a teacher, or the traumatic death of a friend). In general, useful advice and guidelines are stated, and the publisher has helpfully granted permission for purchasers of the book to reproduce handouts and forms from the book. At the end of each chapter are discussion questions and a reference list. An appendix is provided at the end of the book.

However, I have a number of reservations about the book. There are a large number of case vignettes described, taking up almost half of the book. I believe that there are too many, and that they are excessively long and detailed. Individual sessions are frequently described in detail, with the content of sessions and the therapist's analysis and feelings recorded. I did not always find them to be helpful. Most of the references given are from the US, and the training programmes and resources listed are all in the US. These reduce the helpfulness of this book to professionals elsewhere. In addition, there are occasional spelling and grammatical errors.

Overall, while the book is to be welcomed for the guidance and encouragement it gives to those helping bereaved children, I was disappointed. It is perhaps more likely to be of use to counsellors than to other mental health professionals. It may be useful as part of a departmental library, but I cannot recommend it unreservedly.

MARTIN NEWMAN, *Psychological Trauma Unit, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Royal Free Hospital, London*

**Patients as Victims: Sexual Abuse in Psychotherapy and Counselling.** By DEREK JEHU. Chichester: Wiley. 1994. 241 pp. £17.95 (pb).

This is an important topic in mental health care, and one which has been too long neglected. There is no way of knowing how commonly abuse of patients by therapists occurs, and most of the studies (well reviewed in this book) suggest that the numbers are probably (thankfully) fairly small. However, the numerical size of a problem has never been an indicator of its seriousness, and this type of problem is serious – not only because of the harm that is done to the patients, but also because of the wrong that is done to them and the whole profession. It is also a problem which professionals are very unwilling to acknowledge, even though in principle they think it wrong. Although ethically mandated to report abusive colleagues, it appears that very few professionals do. Jehu's book is therefore timely, especially for medical educationalists. The review of US literature is useful, and the results of the UK study of psychologists fascinating (will there be a similar study of UK psychiatrists/psychotherapists?).