

permeate all areas of our lives" and need to be challenged. But not all will be convinced that the relentless pursuit of the "gender differences in patient careers" is finally a constructive exercise. Both male and female long-stay patients have so many unsolved problems in common that emphasis on the special needs of women may well risk the wider thrust of reform.

Yet this is an attractively produced book, and it has a number of important things to say about mentally ill women and their care. For example, in the USA, women constitute nearly two-thirds of the chronically mentally ill; they are said to have a later onset of schizophrenia and require smaller doses of neuroleptics in early adult life; and it is suggested that the roles of oestrogen and brain laterality play a part in gender differences in the major psychoses. The so-called 'greying of America' is also mentioned – i.e. the increasing number of elderly with disproportionately more women – and this phenomenon is already causing problems in other countries.

Some unhappy results of 'deinstitutionalisation' and 'admission diversion' are discussed and illustrated with examples. The all-too-familiar inadequacy of community resources is highlighted, and there is criticism of services marked by excessive regulation and rigidity which therefore fail to meet the needs of those mentally ill women who are pregnant, suffer from physical disabilities, or abuse drugs or alcohol.

This book, then, provides a worthwhile survey of the service needs of chronically mentally ill women and will not be read by male psychiatrists without an occasional stab of guilt. Unfortunately, some of the writing tends to be turgid and jargon-ridden. There are impressive lists of references.

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**Diagnostic Issues in Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa.** Edited by DAVID M. GARNER and PAUL E. GARFINKEL. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1988. 228 pp. \$25.00.

Anyone who has attempted research into eating disorders will be aware of the difficulties of diagnosis or classification of these problems, particularly for bulimia, which at one end of the spectrum merges with anorexia and at the other becomes similar to compulsive eating in obesity. A volume which addresses these and other diagnostic issues is therefore welcome, and Garner and Garfinkel, themselves eminent in the field, have put together a useful selection of papers. Russell begins with a discussion of bulimia nervosa as a diagnostic entity, pointing out the limitations of classifications based on symptomatology alone and the difficulty of applying a strict dividing line between anorexia and bulimia. The

next chapter briefly reviews the thinking behind the recent revision to DSM-III criteria for bulimia, before Fairburn and Garner's two chapters which stress the central role of attitude to shape and weight and go on to argue that anorexia should be distinguished from bulimia on the basis of whether there is a complete restriction of eating, rather than the extent of weight loss which results. The remaining three chapters review the links between depression and eating disorders, the influence of personality factors and the occurrence of anorexia and bulimia nervosa in males. Finally, there are useful appendices which detail the diagnostic criteria which have been proposed by various authors and bodies over the years.

At the end of this fairly short book, questions still remain about the most useful way to classify individuals with eating problems. However, one at least has the sense of being clear about the issues involved, the definitions proposed to date, and the potential value of greater unanimity in the field of diagnosis.

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**The Psychobiology of Bulimia.** Edited by JAMES L. HUDSON and H. G. POPE. Washington: American Psychiatric Press. 1987. 267 pp. £15.00.

**Medical Aspects of Anorexia Nervosa.** By S. BHANJI and D. MATTINGLY. London: John Wright. 1988. 150 pp. £22.00.

Although the editors of *The Psychobiology of Bulimia* have a strong reputation for views about the links between bulimia and depression and the use of antidepressants, I was impressed by the lack of polemics in this review of the biological factors in bulimia and by the individual authors' refreshing frankness about the limitations of their hypotheses. I found the chapters to be well written and easy to read. The book covers its title subject well, and in 14 chapters gives a balanced view of the present state of knowledge. This includes a review of abnormalities of neurotransmitter function, endocrine changes, and metabolic disturbance. Contrasts are drawn between bulimia and anorexia nervosa, depressive disorders, seasonal affective disorders, and anxiety states.

Searching for criticisms of this book, I would perhaps have to comment on its concentration on DSM-III bulimia, with no contrast drawn with bulimia nervosa. In addition, the book completely ignores social and psychological aspects of bulimia, although admittedly such factors are outside the scope of the title.

In contrast, *Medical Aspects of Anorexia Nervosa* is a book which tends to stray from its title. The central nine chapters can be applauded for covering the medical findings in anorexia nervosa with a detailed and complete review of the literature, and with the authors'