

Nevertheless, the whole discussion of how such abuse comes about seemed unsatisfactory. For example, the book suggests that abusing therapists are like "other sex offenders", and recommendations for treatment are made on this basis. But sex offenders are a heterogeneous group, and what makes such different men offend is still very unclear. Even less is known about the psychopathology of abusive therapists. Accepting this, it seems rash (not to say wrong) to be advancing such specific treatment recommendations. The focus on sex offenders also minimises the role of abusive female therapists.

The approach to treatment of victims is similarly simplistic. Most people who are abused by their therapists are distressed people who were abused in childhood. The treatment for the effects of abuse (both past and present) needs to be focused on the abusive relationship. Simple cognitive-behavioural models are not always helpful, especially without an understanding of the dynamics of healthcare relationships.

I found this book completely maddening. Nevertheless, because the topic is so important, one would advise everyone to read this book, especially trainees. The sections on epidemiology and regulation are particularly well done. On the other hand, the treatment of the issues is so superficial that it is hard to recommend. I work as a volunteer with people who have been abused by their therapists. Their stories are tragic, their responses complex, thoughtful and terribly, terribly sad. They lost many things, but especially they lost the treatment that they needed and trusted to help them. This book does not convey their histories in any comprehensive sense, and does not give a proper account of their needs.

GWEN ADSHEAD, *Institute of Psychiatry,
De Crespigny Park, London*

Genetic Studies in Affective Disorders: Overview of Basic Methods, Current Directions, and Critical Research Issues. Edited by DEMITRI F. PAPOLOS and HERBERT M. LACHMAN. Chichester: John Wiley. 1994. 236 pp. £32.95 (hb).

This is the eighth in a series of publications from the Department of Psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, aimed at bringing together important developments in topical areas of psychiatry. All but one of the contributing authors are based in the US. This is a book of two halves, all the topics mentioned in the title being dealt with in Part I. Parts II and III are then devoted to some clinical aspects of genetic studies, and neurobiological investigations.

The chapters comprising Part I are of mixed quality. Highlights for me include a well-structured account of the epidemiological evidence for a genetic contribution

to affective disorders, a discussion of some pertinent problems of diagnosis in genetic research, and a readable history of the Amish Study. However, to call this book an overview and to give broad titles to certain of its chapters is inaccurate. It is better viewed as a collection of focused topics. There is at times unnecessary repetition of information, but more serious are the gaps left between the areas of focus. For example, it is worrying that a book on genetics does not cite association studies in its index and barely mentions them in its text.

The overriding focus of attention is linkage analysis by the lod score method. Two chapters give background information relevant to this technique, but unfortunately they have not been placed together, and examples of lod score results are given before the technique is explained. The chapter on recombinant DNA technology begins in a user-friendly style, but soon descends into a quagmire of jargon, too often undefined, which is likely to leave the general reader lost or asleep. It also concentrates on restriction fragment length polymorphisms rather than the newer genetic markers based on DNA repeat sequences. The chapter more directly concerned with explaining lod scores is clearer, and describes some of the pitfalls which follow misspecification of diagnosis of genetic parameters. It concludes that "none of these problems is insurmountable", but this assumes that a gene of major effect exists for affective disorders: if it turns out that a collection of minor genes underlies the genetic liability to these conditions, then the lod score method will be obsolete and investigators will be obliged to turn to non-parametric linkage as well as association approaches.

Part I ends with a chapter entitled "Molecular genetic studies in affective illness", which is remarkable for its brevity at only seven pages long. One page repeats the chromosome 11 findings from the Amish Study, and the remainder concentrate mainly on studies of the X-chromosome. The conclusion, that "the X-linked form of bipolar illness has now been substantiated" is misleading, since more recent studies cast considerable doubt on this assertion. Inevitably, in such a rapidly developing field, some facts will be out-of-date by the time a book is published. A more positive example is the discovery of the Huntington's disease gene since one of the chapters was written.

The equally long second half of this book is a platform for the editors and their American colleagues. Despite a lengthy justification, the account of the family psychoeducational approach to the management of affective disorders sits uneasily in a book on genetic studies, and takes up a disproportionate amount of space (24 pages). A connection is made with the following and more relevant chapter on genetic counselling. Finally, there are discussions of learned helplessness as an animal model of depression, and the effects of lithium on gene expression. Both chapters

describe interesting results, but it should be remembered that these are two selective examples of work within a wide-ranging field of neurobiological investigation.

For those seeking a systematic overview of the tangled wood that is the genetics of affective disorders, it would perhaps be better to start with, for example, *The Genetics of Mood Disorders* by Tsuang & Faraone, and to reserve this book for the further examination of certain topically interesting trees. But bear in mind that some trees may not be quite as solid as they appear here.

ALASTAIR G. CARDNO, *Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Wales College of Medicine, Heath Park, Cardiff*

The Book of Psychiatric Books. Edited by SIDNEY CROWN and HUGH FREEMAN. Northvale, NJ: Aronson. 1994. 427 pp. US \$45.00 (hb).

This volume contains 37 of the essays which appeared in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* under the title "Books Reconsidered" between 1982 and 1992. The idea of this series proved to be a good one, as most of the authors were reviewing books well known to them. In addition, this compilation includes excerpts of each book to give the reader a taste of what is being reviewed.

The choice and the subjects of the books are wide, as is their time span – from Emil Durkheim (1897) to Alice Coleman (1985). A few of the essays are too brief, and a few others too adulatory, but the majority are substantial, original and enlightening. John Cutting, for instance, is a persuasive advocate of Eugene Minkowski, who had most 'modern' views of the nature of schizophrenia. Most of his work remains unread over here, as little has been translated from the French. John Birtchnell provides a thoughtful and unaggressive critique of Thomas Szasz, and Patrick Pietroni gives a balanced account of the achievements of Michael Balint. Some 20 psychological therapists of all persuasions receive careful consideration, from the Freuds and Otto Fenichel to Joseph Wolpe, Hans Eysenck, Aaron Beck and Isaac Marks. Jerome Frank (my favourite) is well covered by Mark Aveline.

Eugen Bleuler is reconsidered by his son and grandson, with an enlightening account of his early career. He was the first director of the Burgholzli Clinic to speak and to understand the language used by its patients, coming as he did from a local family and having spent 12 formative years (from 29 to 40) as director of the small clinic at Rheinau, where, on its land in the Rhine Valley, Bleuler lived and worked among the patients.

Such revealing biographical details are to be found in many of the essays. I read once more Michael

Shepherd's powerful advocacy of Karl Jasper's great and difficult book: "the most important single book to have been published on the aims and logic of psychological medicine". It is, after all, a valedictory work, Jasper's farewell to psychiatry, but I reckon that Eugen Bleuler learnt more on his land in Rheinau.

Even autobiographical details are not entirely absent. You will discover, for instance – but I will not reveal – what happened when Sidney Crown found himself in a urinal in Edinburgh with Cattell on one side of him and Thurston on the other. This is a book which could provide many happy hours of continuing medical education for any psychiatrist who can still find some spare time and money for solitary reading.

J. L. T. BIRLEY, *Upper Bryn, Longtown, Hereford*

Feminist Perspectives on Eating Disorders. Edited by PATRICIA FALLON, MELANIE KATZMAN and SUSAN WOOLEY. New York: Guilford Press. 1994. 465 pp. £25.00 (hb).

Eating disorders are a feminist issue. They indicate the price paid by women, just as they are becoming increasingly liberated, in submitting to today's "beauty myth" injunction not to be fat. Contributors to Fallon's collection observe that children as young as three years of age are "weightist"; that teenage girls worry about being too big (whereas boys want to be bigger); and that over 50% of middle-aged women, asked what they would most like to change about their lives, say they want to lose weight.

Others document weightism's individual effects. Brigman describes her mother's bulimic attempt to regain the celebrated good looks of her youth in the hope of thereby relieving her depression at being beaten by her husband and losing her father to Parkinson's disease. Thompson recounts instances of women resorting to starving or bingeing to offset the injuries done them by sexual abuse, or by homophobic, racial, or class discrimination. Others make do with statistical generality: Perlick & Silverstein, for instance, adduce epidemiological data about eating disorders, depression, and somatic symptoms (e.g. headaches) in claiming that these ills constitute a syndrome affecting adolescent girls as a result of the "gender ambivalence" induced by increased educational opportunity.

A few describe individual therapy: the impact of the therapist's pregnancy on eating-disordered patients; the use of antidepressant drugs; helping patients understand and reconnect with, rather than blame, their mothers; male and female therapists' different attitudes toward physical and emotional closeness; therapy's effects in getting bulimic patients to recognise their feelings of, say, anger. Again, however, detail is sacrificed to generalisation, with many contributors recommending treatment of women's self-hatred through