

Twin Research: Part A. Psychology and Methodology; Part B. Biology and Epidemiology; Part C. Clinical Studies. Edited by WALTER NANCE. New York: Alan R. Liss. 1978. A. Pp 272, B. Pp 218, C. Pp 287. Set: \$80 (A. \$27, B. \$22, C. \$30).

This publication is the twenty-fourth and latest in the series *Progress in Clinical and Biological Research*. All the papers included were presented at the Second International Congress of Twin Studies held in Washington eighteen months ago. The material has been divided into three parts, separately bound.

In Part A—*Psychology and Methodology*, a total of twenty-seven articles are grouped into three subsections. In the first, 'The Psychology of Twins', the main areas covered are particular aspects of personality development and the emergence of sexual and social attitudes in twin partners. The unresolved question of genetic determinants of handedness and hemispheric asymmetry of language function is also discussed. In spite of its title—'Behaviour Genetic Studies with Twins', the second edition includes two excellent papers on the experimental use and abuse of monozygotic twins reared apart. James Shields' methodological appraisal of the use of MZA twins to determine the genetic bias in personality development, intelligence and psychiatric illness is succinct and clear. Reference is made to his own series of forty-four identical twins separated during childhood; the article contains a surprisingly frank criticism of earlier, similar work by Sir Cyril Burt. Also presented in the same section are a comprehensive Danish twin study of manic-depressive disorder and an evaluation of the possible use of twin data on psychiatric nosology. Examples of the latter are confirmation of the division, initially by Leonhard, of endogenous depression into bipolar and unipolar types, and clarification of the relationship between schizophrenia and the schizoid personality. 'The Monozygotic Half-Sib Model: A Tool for Epidemiologic Research' is fairly representative of papers in the third section, 'Methodology of Twin Research'. Intelligibility of content is presumably confined to practising geneticists and those with vivid imaginations.

Part B—*Biology and Epidemiology*, and Part C—*Clinical Studies* are almost devoid of psychiatric interest. Areas covered include biological, obstetric and epidemiological aspects of twinning, twin registries, biochemical and anthropometric studies, and twin data of various medical states.

For those directly involved in psychiatric or psychological research utilizing twins and for those with a more general interest in medical genetics, this

volume probably constitutes worthwhile reading. From a more general psychiatric standpoint its value is decidedly limited.

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Social Conflict and Mental Health Services. By ROBERT D. BORGMAN. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1978. Pp 339. \$24.50, \$18.50 (paperback).

This book is an expression of concern, generated by the author's experience of working in an American community mental health centre. He believed that mental health treatment was frequently imposed on unwilling recipients, resulting in violations of human rights and loss of personal dignity. Thus, one of his main objectives is "to incorporate the concerns expressed in the 'anti-psychiatry' literature in formulating a workable, constructive model of mental health treatment applicable to reluctant clients as well as to those seeking treatment voluntarily". The main concepts are derived from sociological conflict theories such as those of L. Coser and R. Dahrendorf and they are applied to diverse situations including suicide, homicide, school aversion, adolescent conflicts, the menopause and old age. The attempt to consider such significant issues within this sociological framework is welcome as it complements other psychological and sociological approaches which are more widely available. It is a great pity, therefore, that the author loses credibility by degenerating at times into simplistic generalizations and inaccuracies. I wish I could recommend the book more wholeheartedly.

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Unilateral and Bilateral ECT: A Psychiatric and Psychological Study of Therapeutic Effect and Side Effects. By JORGEN HESHE, ERIK RÔDER and ALICE THEILGAARD. Copenhagen, Denmark. 1978. Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica, Supplementum 275. Pp 180. No price stated.

In this study bilateral ECT was found, one week after the end of a course, to be a more effective treatment for the depressive phase of a manic depressive illness than unilateral ECT given over the non-dominant hemisphere. Seven patients, five of whom were women over 60, failed to respond to unilateral ECT and alone accounted for its inferior showing.

The report is about ten times longer than those of most comparable studies; what use is made of this extra length? There is a 21-point code of good practice by which these other studies are judged. Theories as to how ECT works are surveyed, and the physics of current distribution between the electrodes is reviewed. Finally, some 600 comparisons generated by a battery of psychological tests—but yielding only 53 statistically significant differences—are reported on and evaluated.

Those who are willing to sift the main points from the details will find this a valuable and careful study which usefully brings together information widely scattered in the journals.

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The Psychopath. A Comprehensive Study of Antisocial Disorders and Behaviours. Edited by W. H. REID. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1978. Pp 349. \$17.50.

This book consists largely of a collection of review articles on various aspects of antisocial disorders. It is divided into three parts, the first supposedly addresses itself to the 'philosophy and sociology' which surround antisocial disorders; the second, which comprises over half the book, examines the literature on psychopathy from different theoretical viewpoints; the third, and shortest section, comments on aspects of treatment.

Although in the first chapter the editor offers us the proposed D.S.M.III criteria for antisocial personality, this is not, by any means, adhered to by even the majority of authors writing in the book. She, however, can understand their problem when the literature which they draw from to support or oppose different viewpoints is itself riddled by semantic confusion and lack of standard definitions.

Within these limitations, and the limitations that several of the reviews have appeared (if in slightly different form) elsewhere, there is much of interest in the book. The first section is certainly the weakest and no attempt is made to trace the historical development of the concept which is surely an important element in trying to understand its 'philosophy and sociology'. The second section contains some interesting papers, including rather over lengthy presentations of the psychoanalytical viewpoint, with papers on Social and Familial Correlates, Neurological Aspects and Psychophysiological Research Findings which provide a good lead into the American literature (being an American book one must perhaps

excuse the sparsity of reference to English works). The third section on treatment reflects how far psychiatry has to go if it is to play any role in the treatment of these disorders.

In general then, this is a book that repays dipping into rather than comprehensive reading but, as such, is probably worth a place in most libraries.

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Search for Harry Price. By TREVOR H. HALL. London: Duckworth. 1978. Pp 237. £7.95.

When in 1948 Harry Price received an urgent call from his Maker, he can have had no very firm conviction of personal survival. The last thirty years or so of his life had been spent in propagating that belief; but while he bamboozled others he may not have succeeded in bamboozling himself. He was the premier ghost-finder and psychic journalist of his age. He wrote many best-sellers, including *The Most Haunted House in England* and *The End of Borley Rectory*, apart from numerous articles and radio appearances. His press-cuttings, sedulously collected, filled 40 folio volumes. He donated a very valuable library on all occult subjects to the University of London—the Harry Price Library in the Senate House. By a hair's breadth he missed an honorary doctorate from the University of Bonn. But it was all to elevate the fame of Harry Price; and the ghosts at Borley were largely of his own making.

The Haunting of Borley Rectory (1956) by Dr Trevor Hall (with E. J. Dingwall and K. M. Goldney) was a complete exposure of the mystification and trickery that had gone to the making of the *Most Haunted House* saga. This was indeed recognised at the time by reviewers and critics; but the ghosts had been scotched and not finally laid. The saga was too good a story not to be revived by the unscrupulous. As Price himself said, "so many people prefer the 'bunk' to the 'debunk'."

But there is great joy in the debunk. Dr Hall's ruthless sanitary operation is as diverting as instructive. He is a biographical researcher of immense industry and expertise; more, he is a detective of genius. Poor Harry has been stripped of all his bogus trappings and left with but a single shift to cover his nakedness. He did give that exceptional library into public guardianship.

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