

children and families. The children's ages range from three to 16 years. The problems cover broken families, divorce, adoption, bereavement, school problems, re-constituted families, chronic illness and inconsistent parenting. The author shows how she arrives at her conclusions and decisions on therapy and she also openly discusses the professional and personal issues that challenged her in the individual cases. These were the successful and rewarding interventions. In the eighth chapter, however, Dr Lewis presents a selection of children and families where things did not go as hoped, some of her more "sobering experiences".

This volume should give insight, instruction, guidance and sometimes comfort, to professionals of all disciplines in child therapy. It is written with humour and great sensitivity and there are a comprehensive reference and additional reading sections given.

A good addition to the bookshelf.

PAMELA WILLS, *Consultant Psychiatrist,
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Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Modern Approaches. Second Edition. Edited by MICHAEL RUTTER and LIONEL HERSOV. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1985. Pp. 960. £55.

It is a testimony to the rapid development of child psychiatry that we have been eagerly awaiting the second edition of the text first produced by Rutter and Hersov in 1977. Despite the comprehensive nature of the first edition it rapidly became out of date and there were obvious gaps which have become even more apparent over these years. Fortunately, the gaps have been filled in this superb book which will certainly be the standard reference for the speciality for years to come.

Rutter and Hersov have doubled the number of contributors to produce a broad and thorough review of theoretical, clinical and treatment issues in child and adolescent psychiatry. In so doing the book is twice the size and twice the price. It remains excellent value for those committed to child psychiatry but, sadly, the price may deter some potential purchasers, such as trainees in psychiatry for whom it would be an invaluable text for Membership as well as a more than adequate introduction to child psychiatry and many aspects of adult psychiatry. It is certainly an essential reference book for those doing research or working in psychology, social work, and paediatrics, for example.

There are 18 new chapters. Some of the serious omissions now covered, include family therapy, disorders of infancy, paediatric liaison, child abuse, special education, eating disorders, consultative work and group therapy. Mental handicap and adolescent psychiatry are given appropriate greater emphasis. Particularly interesting additions are the chapter on acute reactions to stress by Garmez & Rutter and two by Rutter, links between childhood and adult life and the concluding chapter which discusses the effectiveness of psychological therapies and their evaluation. The latter two highlight areas requiring research in the future.

Each chapter contains an up-to-date and thorough review of the literature and it is striking how many important publications in the speciality there have been recently. Would that the pace could continue, but sadly, this will be difficult with decreasing academic resources and ever increasing clinical workloads. We are probably too dependent on the resources of the Institute of Psychiatry who make up almost half the contributors as for the first edition. The American contribution has increased fivefold. Hopefully, this will result in a wide readership in the United States and enhance the vastly improving interchange between the two countries. Even if our organisation of services differs at least we can ensure a common core of knowledge and mutual understanding.

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The Effects of Autism on the Family. Edited by ERIC SCHOPLER and GARY B. MESIBOV. New York: Plenum. 1984. Pp. 363. \$42.00.

This book is published as a volume in the *Current Issues in Autism* series. It is a description of the interactions between professionals and families who have a child with autism. There are four main sections: the professional as advocate, as trainer, as trainee and as the giver and receiver of emotional support. These titles reflect the aspects of clinical practice considered important by the numerous contributors.

There is a useful overview of the social policies operating in the United States and which this country is just introducing in the care of handicapped children. A cautionary message is conveyed about treatment programmes being based on unrealistic expectations and social fads which form a historical perspective and last about a decade. The author of this chapter discusses the systems

approach, the over-simplified response to normalisation, the principles of promoting a child's development through continuity of care and having parents as partners and as teachers.

This is followed by a comprehensive account of the literature concerning families with an autistic child and concludes with a comment on the large gaps in research. Chapters written by parents about their personal development from perplexed and bewildered parents into knowledgeable professional trainers are very much within the context of American society but could be paralleled in this country. I found two chapters particularly useful, one a detailed description of a model family interview when news of their child's handicap is revealed for the first time to the parents, which I suggest should be read by medical students, and the other a 'simple professional's guide to obtaining resources'; the latter puts structure where there is usually jelly-like floundering!

I consider the book to be valuable for the variety of contributions and contributors, i.e. parents through to professionals heading departments and programmes within the USA. I would recommend this volume to parents, professionals and students working with handicapped children and their families because it presents issues of care in an interesting and stimulating manner.

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Drugs in Central Nervous System Disorders. Edited by DAVID C. HORWELL. New York: Marcel Dekker. 1985. Pp. 354. \$65.00.

This book differs in scope and direction from the pattern of many textbooks on psychopharmacology. It contains contributions by neurologists, pharmacologists and research workers, and the field is reviewed with a stronger neurological emphasis. The major sections deal with central acting analgesics, antidepressants, benzodiazepines and barbiturates, neuroleptic agents and drugs affecting endocrine and motor regulation, with a final chapter on drugs from other cultures. In most cases, there is wide discussion of the pharmacology of drug groups and even individual compounds with plentiful comment on current status, providing much to supplement information usually available.

The source material for these reviews is uniformly voluminous, but there is a tendency, in places, to make bald statements which imply a somewhat negative view of the effectiveness of certain

treatments. Comments such as "Lithium has little value in the treatment of unipolar depression" are unlikely to go unchallenged, and it is surprising in a work which encompasses the treatment of infertility to find no mention of the premenstrual syndrome or the effects of certain approaches to oral contraception. These are points of policy which do not intrude on the impeccable review element of this work, which covers ground neglected between neurology and psychiatry. The sections on neuroleptic agents and drugs of ethno-origin are particularly impressive. The book should be of particular interest and special value to those concerned with research in the pharmacology of the CNS and seniors involved in liaison work.

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Personal Construct Theory and Mental Health. Edited by ERIC BUTTON. Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm. 1985. Pp. 394. £22.50.

Button opens the book with a brief but clear exposition of personal construct theory and of ways of eliciting constructs. Van den Bergh *et al* review the thin but unbroken line of Kellian research on schizophrenia and its therapeutic implications. In discussing depression, Neimeyer locates a construct theory model in the context of cognitive approaches and Winter compares a construct view of neurosis with learning and psychoanalytic models, using nicely drawn case illustrations. Stefan and Von criticise universal pathway theories of suicide and emphasise that while there are commonalities (suicide as a dedicated act, as reaction to boredom, as lunging for certainty) the individual meaning of suicide remains to be explored. Again emphasising meaningfulness, Button discusses eating disorders in terms of the personal significance of being fat or thin and (as in all the chapters) the therapeutic implications of personal construct theory are outlined. Rivers and Landfield on alcoholism and Dawes on drug dependence show how construct theory research (often using grids) can examine the personal meanings of addiction. Neimeyer and Neimeyer conduct a general discussion of disturbed relationships in terms of Kellian theory while Agnew contributes a thoughtful and imaginative exploration of childhood disorders. Davis and Cunningham emphasise that theory does not set up a 'separate category' psychology to deal with the mentally handicapped while Viney provides a guide book for all who travel through the Kingdom of the Sick, whether patient or professional.

The book is perhaps the best available one-volume illustration of the usefulness of personal construct theory to the clinician.

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