

clinical vignettes which graphically convey the positive style and directness of its approach. There is a marked absence, however, of any kind of formal evaluation of its efficacy. This is particularly frustrating, as the reader is repeatedly bombarded with clinical accounts of patients with longstanding symptoms, unhelped by previous analysts, who then begin Ericksonian therapy and are, of course, cured within a few weeks. It would have been reassuring to read about a patient who could not be helped by this kind of approach!

The opening chapters of the book are spoilt by repeated, unnecessary criticisms of psychoanalysis, and little factual information regarding Ericksonian methods is presented.

The next sections, however, are much more balanced and interesting, although the chapters on metaphors were rather disappointing. The section on family therapy is particularly enthralling. It includes an entertaining account by Papp of how a debate amongst therapists, regarding solutions to a family problem, can become a therapeutic tool, if the debate is carried out in the presence of the family themselves.

The book is an unashamed homage to the late Milton Erickson, clearly a remarkable man, who generated great affection, loyalty and regard from those who knew him. The most interesting aspects of the book are inevitably those personal memories and insights given by many of the contributors (including three of his children) of Erickson as therapist. This book is a must for the Ericksonian devotee, but is unlikely to be of interest to many psychiatrists or psychotherapists in the UK.

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Relapse Prevention for Addictive Behaviours: A Manual for Therapists. By SHAMIL WANIGARATNE, WENDY WALLACE, JANE PULLIN, FRANCIS KEANEY and ROGER FARMER. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1990. 205 pp. £12.95.

The art of packaging an idea to capture the public imagination is not only the advertising copywriters' skill. In the midst of the 'cognitive therapy revolution' relapse prevention has caught the imagination of the growing army of addiction workers.

The central idea of relapse prevention has been to focus treatment of alcohol and drug problems and other behavioural addictions on the maintenance of behaviour change or, as the originator of relapse prevention, Alan Marlatt writes in the foreword, to "educate clients in the art of autoregulation".

Teaching people to stay drug-free has been the role of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) for decades, so one should ask what makes relapse prevention different. The authors of this book suggest that relapse prevention focuses control on the individual while AA is based on a medical

model that wrests control from the individual. In many ways relapse prevention may be seen as the key elements of the AA strategies recast with the theoretical underpinnings of social learning theory. The availability of relapse prevention widens the range of treatment options and increases the possibility of tailoring treatment to individual need.

The authors of this book provide an overview of the theoretical concepts underlying relapse prevention, as well as detailed descriptions of their own method of applying this approach to group therapy. They provide details of all their own data sheets and evaluation forms which could be useful for people wishing to apply such an approach.

The book describes six weekly group therapy sessions with a detailed programme for each. The sessions are for people who have stopped or controlled their drinking or drug use and aim to facilitate the maintenance of this change. They aim to teach people to identify high risk situations and to develop alternative coping strategies. Other areas such as relaxation, anxiety, meditation, assertiveness, problem solving, depression and life style balance are covered.

Overall the manual outlines a well structured and detailed programme of relapse prevention focused group psychotherapy. Clinicians embarking on relapse prevention will find many helpful, detailed and practical points in this manual.

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The Genetics of Mood Disorders. By MING T. TSUANG and STEPHEN V. FARAONE. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1990. 220 pp. £29.00.

The aim of this book appears to be to summarise most genetic studies of mood disorders from their earliest days to the present. The format is traditional, with a chapter on diagnostic and methodological issues, followed by sections on family, twin and adoption studies. Having demonstrated the heritable nature of mood disorders, the authors then discuss modes of transmission, linkage and association studies, and lastly biological markers. The final chapter attempts to draw conclusions from the preceding text, and discuss the implications of the research to date. Overall, the authors have fastidiously covered almost all areas of genetic investigation and present their review of the literature in detail. The text may therefore serve as an excellent base which the interested reader can further develop.

Unfortunately, the style is a bit soporific and the book starts with a chapter that could well deter all but the most dedicated from progressing further. The authors, while successfully arguing that mood disorders may encompass syndromes heterogeneous in aetiology,

grossly over-cite studies to support this rather modest and uncontroversial claim.

Once this hurdle has been overcome, one moves on to the discourse proper. All the chapters are similar in style, starting with a useful introduction to the rationale of the study designs to be discussed and some mention of their limitations and pitfalls. There then follows a thorough enumeration of the studies, with a brief description of each, followed by a general summary.

The introductory aspects of each chapter are variable in quality, being particularly good as related to family, twin and adoption studies, but poorer as pertains to models of transmission and marker studies. For the latter types of study this is a major deficit when trying to make sense of findings which, as a rule, are conflicting. An irritating feature of the introductions is the presence of equations which are not derived mathematically or explained in English. Although mathematical derivation is probably beyond the scope of this book, the failure to explain the equations in common sense terms is liable to reduce the reader to the role of spectator.

The substance of each chapter gives a review of individual studies pertinent to the title of that chapter. The result is that an immense amount of information is presented, but with a relative paucity of integration and generalisation, ensuring that the text is enlightening, if somewhat dry. However, although the style may be off-putting, both the raw data and the essences thereof are present, albeit in separate parts.

In short, the main asset of this book is a detailed breakdown of an immense number of publications covering the full range of genetic investigations into mood disorders. It also has useful introductory discussions of the methods of family, twin and adoption studies but is poorer in other aspects, particularly studies of linkage and association. Summation of the data is a relatively minor feature of the book, and therefore it is not particularly recommended to the general reader. Psychiatric libraries, however, would be providing themselves with a worthwhile source book.

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Current Concepts of Suicide. Edited by DAVID LESTER.
Philadelphia: The Charles Press. 1990. 236 pp.

This volume is intended to provide a summing up of where we stand in the field of suicide research. Suicide is an area where there is an obvious interface between many different academic disciplines, and this volume contains contributions from psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists, each writing from the point of view of their discipline.

Contained in the book, therefore, are many different approaches to the study of suicide. Two chapters look-

ing at the biology of suicide are extremely well written and easy to understand. The putative role of serotonin is placed in perspective with a plea for increased precision in the methodology of behavioural measurements. One chapter focuses on the work of Durkheim, who has had a tremendous influence on the study of suicide from the point of view of sociology. This is brought up to date with a useful account of the current debates in the world of sociology concerning Durkheim's theories. There are chapters reviewing the role of the media in suicide and also public health issues connected with suicide. One point made in the latter contribution is the lack of awareness in this country about the impact that stricter emission controls on car exhausts have had in reducing deaths from suicide due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Additionally, there is an intriguing account by an anthropologist of the concept of 'revenge suicide', whereby women in some cultures are able to assert some control over the society in which they live by the act of suicide. Another useful review is a critical analysis of using the ecological approach in studying suicide.

This book offers psychiatrists the chance of reading about some of the developments in other academic fields that relate to suicide. A common failing of some American-edited volumes is avoided in that the authors of the different chapters come not only from the United States but also Canada and Europe. There is only an odd chapter or two that is poorly written with comments on research of dubious value. The diverse topics covered and overall quality of this volume result in a stimulating book from which I was able to learn a great deal.

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Emotions and the Dual Brain. Edited by G. GAINOTTI
and C. CALTAGORONE. Heidelberg: Springer GmbH.
1989. 270 pp. DM98.00.

Charles Darwin's claim that emotional expressions are part of man's biological inheritance seems only recently to have been rediscovered. This rediscovery has been fuelled by interest in the right cerebral hemisphere, which many believe to be as dominant for emotional behaviour as is the left hemisphere for linguistic functions. This collection of essays was based on a conference in honour of an Italian physiologist, Giuseppe Moruzzi. Much of the writing reflects the neurological bias of the research presented, such as chapters by Doty on the anatomical substrates of emotion and connections between the two hemispheres, whereas chapters by Gainotti and Etcoff look at different emotional disturbances resulting from brain lesions in humans. Latter chapters take on a more cognitive approach with a chapter by Tucker from Oregon which looks at possible brain abnormalities underlying affective disorder.