

**Drugs and Sexual Function: A Pharmacological Approach.** By M. A. DAVIES and A. D'MELLO. Harpenden: Ridge Publications. 1986. 66 pp. £4.00.

This short booklet is intended to be read by a large group, including doctors, pharmacists, pharmacologists, research workers, medical teachers, and students. It is unlikely that any text could appeal to all of these equally, and I suspect that it will be read mostly by students, although they may well be put off by the price. The authors are extremely modest and do not indicate their place of work or qualifications. They give a good account of the physiology of sexual function in the first third of the book, followed by an account of the ways in which drugs can affect functioning in different ways. This is useful because it emphasises that it is not always easy to interpret the effects of drugs on sexual function. The final part of the book outlines the actual effects of drugs on sexual function, and this is summarised in tabular form at the end of the book. Much of the information was obtained from a computer search of the literature between 1979 and 1984 and is reasonably up to date.

I found the text easy to follow, although its style was a little journalistic. The clear diagrams aid understanding, and some of them are very good. There is little doubt that the authors have identified an important problem, and one which is not dealt with particularly well elsewhere. I hope the book will succeed in reaching a wide audience, and it is a pity that they have not been able to persuade their publishers, who appear to be new to the medical field, to market the book at a lower price to aid sales.

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**Suicide in Adolescence.** Edited by R. F. W. DIEKSTRA and K. HAWTON. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1987. 196 pp. Dfl. 100.00, \$43.50, £27.95.

This is a valuable book which will disabuse anyone who believes suicide is the prerogative of the elderly. The authors, each an authority on suicide in adolescence, have provided ten chapters organised into five themes: the epidemiology of suicide in the young; personal factors associated with the phenomenon (by means of an illuminating case history); the principles of assessment and treatment; the inter-relationship between their families and the young who kill themselves; and schemes for prevention.

There is a good balance, in terms of length and style, among the chapters, and each author writes lucidly and with authority. They are careful to differentiate between what are their own personal opinions and what are more widely established empirical findings.

The only disappointing features of the book are certain lapses in presentation. A few of the figures are a challenge to the eye. An incorrect figure has been presented in the text, although the publishers have provided the correct one in their 'Errata'. In the latter they have also corrected two typographical errors; unfortunately, there are others which seem to have gone undetected. There is also an unwelcome lack of correspondence on occasions between the references mentioned in the text and those in the reference lists. It is a pity about these matters, because generally the book is well presented.

In summary, this book will be useful for clinicians and researchers. It highlights an important and (sadly) a growing problem. The reader is not only challenged to take the matter seriously, but given useful information and practical advice about how to deal with this problem.

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**The Uses of Countertransference.** By MICHAEL GORKIN. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson. 1987. 312 pp. \$27.50.

Gorkin is a psychologist and practising analyst, and his book comes very much from within the psychoanalytic tradition. He traces the development of the idea of countertransference from Freud's rather sketchy description onwards. In passing, he produces the clearest explanation I have seen of that most tricky concept, projective identification. The body of the book explores the nature of the countertransference experiences which can arise in a variety of clinical circumstances, and discusses whether and how such feelings should be made use of in therapy.

The writing is clear, very full references are given, and differences and inconsistencies in the work of the various authors are discussed. The conclusions drawn suffer from the common difficulty with psychoanalytic writings that they are not systematically researched (and are perhaps unresearchable). However, we all have to struggle with the feelings our patients induce in us, and even the most dedicated opponent of analysis could learn from the direct way in which Gorkin describes such feelings.

This book deserves to be widely read and should certainly appear on the shelves of psychiatric libraries.

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**Mental Illness in Primary Care Settings.** Edited by MICHAEL SHEPHERD, GREG WILKINSON and PAUL WILLIAMS. London: Tavistock. 1986. 296 pp. £19.95.

This book documents the proceedings of a conference held at the Institute of Psychiatry in 1984, the principal