

objective of which was to evaluate and learn from the link between research and policy in this field. The coverage is wide, ranging from classification, screening, and treatment differences on the one hand to professional team roles and patterns of collaboration on the other. In addition, there are a number of short contributions based on experience and aspirations in other countries which, by and large, fail to relate relevant insights to the English scene. It is, however, the omissions that stand out. There is an absence of any substantial discussion of primary prevention in this apparently ideal setting, perhaps emphasising how little of practical value is known about the aetiology of psychiatric conditions. Balint, too, is mentioned but once in passing, and interviewing skills hardly at all.

Given the primary care setting, the book adopts a prior assumption of the medical model and deviates little from this. Much emphasis is given to the team approach, but little empirical evidence is presented on what is actually done by whom and, in particular, the precise skills exhibited by the various professionals. This is epitomised by the fact that one contributor asserts that the most important aspect is that a person is on the spot at the right time. Indeed, in the book there is debate about whether collaboration within or between teams depends essentially on personalities, the discriminating characteristics of which are not identified. Except when considering drug treatment effectiveness, this book does not help to differentiate the specific from non-specific factors in this field.

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Parental Influences: In Health and Disease. Edited by JAMES E. ANTHONY and GEORGE H. POLLOCK. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone. 1986. 531 pp. £25.70.

This book, edited by two distinguished psychoanalysts, consists of a series of psychoanalytically-orientated papers on the clinical aspects of ordinary and disturbed parenting. Topics include cross-generational influences, the parental experience, pathological parenting, and specific situations such as violence and psychosomatic disease. Much reference is made throughout to the works of Anna Freud, Winnicott, and Therese Benedek. It has the usual strengths and weaknesses of psychoanalytic writings – vivid and detailed case descriptions, but a turgid and often incomprehensible style of writing with an irritating lack of objectivity and criticism. This latter is particularly notable in the chapter by Sackin, ironically entitled “The parents of children with psychosomatic diseases: a critical review of the literature”. Sackin criticises authors who espouse ideas with which he disagrees for reaching conclusions not adequately supported by their data. In contrast, he quotes in

support of his arguments scores of authors, most of whom are subject to the same criticism, but the criticism is not forthcoming.

The psychoanalytically inclined will enjoy this book. With the exception of Wallerstein's excellent chapter on divorce, the rest of us would do well to look elsewhere if we are to learn more about parenting. Are we still expected to take seriously such statements as “the reason why such mothers (post-partum psychosis) are unable to recathet the baby after birth is because they are narcissistic and too fearful that ‘a declaration of ownership of the baby’ as a stolen penis would draw the anger and retaliation of those who regarded it as their own”?

BRYAN LASK, *Consultant Psychiatrist, The Hospitals for Sick Children, London*

The Adolescent in Group and Family Therapy (2nd edn). Edited by MAX SUGAR. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1975, 1986. 298 pp. £12.50.

This edition is a reprint, some ten years on, of the first, with an additional chapter by the editor on transference in adolescent group psychotherapy.

Each chapter describes a way of handling problems presented by adolescents according to the experience of the authors, whose expertise lies primarily within a psychoanalytical framework. The problems whose therapy is discussed range from those that present as personal problems to those seen as community based – e.g. school or ghetto problems – or related to membership of a problem family or to drug addiction.

For those to whom this book is unfamiliar, it contains timeless information about the adolescent process and the tasks of adolescence, which are presented, for the most part, in the form of clear descriptions of adolescent behaviour. Although the observations are usually presented from a psychoanalytical perspective, they are generally written in a way that would interest and inform those who do not embrace a psychoanalytical approach. The book can be recommended, provided it is read in the knowledge that the principles underlying both group and family therapy are subject to developmental change.

DOROTHY H. HEARD, *Consultant Psychotherapist, University of Leeds*

Till Death Do Us Part: How Couples Stay Together. By JEANETTE C. LAUER and ROBERT H. LAUER. New York: The Haworth Press. 1987. 192 pp. \$24.95.

This book is based on questionnaire surveys of 351 marriages, some fulfilling, others not. The authors concentrate on what constitutes a successful marriage, and examine aspects such as commitment, individuality

versus togetherness, conflict styles, intimacy, effective communication, "the meaning and course of true love", and managing change. Among issues raised are whether happiness really is the complete satisfaction of instinctual needs, and whether cohabitation is an adequate preparation for marriage. They conclude that in America, after experimentation with promiscuity, "marriage is back".

Research results include quotations from couples, and each section concludes with sentimental, often platitudinous, truisms such as, "Troubled as well as gratifying years may mark the course of a long-term satisfying marriage". Sub-sections called "Action guidelines" proffer advice and suggestions on how to sustain a happy marriage. Much of this is schmaltz, apparently substantiated by research, presented in an ingenuous, moralising, 'Bible belt' style, using everyday language, and addressed to a "wide variety of professionals".

JAMES ATKINSON, *Consultant Psychotherapist, Cambridge*

Foundations of Contextual Therapy: Collected Papers of Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy. By IVAN BOSZORMENYI-NAGY. New York: Brunner-Mazel. 1987. 337 pp. \$35.00.

These papers, covering a period of 30 years, reflect the developing thought of one of the most original thinkers regarding the family context of mental illness.

Boszormenyi-Nagy's approach to psychotherapy is based on his appreciation of what he sees as the absolute existential reality of peoples' responsibilities and obligations to one another, especially within the family. The necessity of respecting these obligations, which the author refers to as 'relational ethics', is absolute; it cannot be ignored or postponed indefinitely without a heavy price in mental health. The individual is embedded in relationships, and, in particular, in a family matrix – the narcissist who attempts to deny this interdependence will be unfulfilled and may become ill. Arguing that a purely individualistic approach to therapy, or indeed to life itself, may be ultimately disastrous, Boszormenyi-Nagy encourages the therapist to take account of all persons involved in relations with the patient.

In working with marriages or families, the contextual therapist addresses the 'ethical' issues of fairness, trustworthiness, and entitlement. The assumption seems to be that people do have an intuitive sense of justice and fairness in personal transactions. 'Entitlement' is earned through the caring one gives to another. When this principle of justice is violated, the individual and his or her relationships become disturbed. The therapist helps all parties involved to reassess what each may expect of the other and also attempts to locate disguised forms of caring that are going on. The author talks also about

'destructive entitlement', a lack of remorse over destructive or exploitative behaviour, which results from being deprived or exploited. This is one of the main features described by Kernberg as characteristic of narcissistic disorders; interestingly, Boszormenyi-Nagy comments: "This freedom from remorse is not a psychological distortion. Tragically, it was actually earned through having been exploited. It is in consequence of a destructive reality". However, I am left wondering to what extent *unjustified* feelings of entitlement may be stoked up within certain personalities and grievances exploited by destructive parts of the mind – the book does not address this possibility.

The necessity for concern with posterity is emphasised. It is argued that it is only through a concern with future generations that one's legacy of caring received from one's parents can be repaid. The message is that an uncaring, exploitive attitude towards the world and its future is devastating to our mental health – a view which reminded me strongly of those of the psychoanalyst Donald Meltzer, expressed, for example, in his *Sexual States of Mind*.

Boszormenyi-Nagy sees his work as offering a perspective on therapeutic approaches, rather than a complete method in itself. His own earlier background was psychoanalytic, and indeed he regards an understanding of individual psychodynamics as essential. There are many aspects of mental life and relationships which these papers do not address – anxiety, for example, a basic focus of the analytic therapist, is not even listed in the index. While initially irritated by the prevalence of neologisms and unnecessarily dense writing in this collection, I was left feeling that my understanding of therapy and of human relationships had been enriched.

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Therapeutic Trances: The Cooperation Principle in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy. By STEPHEN G. GILLIGAN. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1987. 380 pp. \$51.00.

Gilligan first reviews various approaches to hypnotherapy, clearly favouring the 'co-operative', or Ericksonian, approach. The basic premise is that therapy is a joint endeavour between therapist and client. Identification and use of the client's resources, rather than exploration of the past, are also central features. Symptoms may be used as the basis for trance induction.

The author reviews various theories of hypnotic trance and some of its characteristics. He then outlines the general approach of the Ericksonian hypnotherapist, and goes on to describe the 'co-operation strategies' whereby the therapist establishes rapport and prepares clients for the induction of trance. The remainder of the book describes various means of inducing trance and