

better when there is only one cook. Again, patients want to identify someone who carries over-all responsibility, and on whom they can rely. How far is the assumption of responsibility in these respects compatible with sharing? Is the type of social organization he describes the most therapeutic? Dr Jones provides no evidence to validate his claims, and begs the question through his definition of 'therapeutic'.

This book—a lengthy essay rather than monograph—will help psychiatrists and others to brush up on Dr Jones' teaching on 'organization development' and encourage them to look again at their own units.

DEREK RUSSELL DAVIS

### EPIDEMIOLOGY

#### **Life History Research in Psychopathology.**

Vol 4. Edited by ROBERT D. WIRT, GEORGE WINOKUR and MERRILL ROFF. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. 1975. Pp ix+360. Index 3 pp. Price \$19.50.

As biology is concerned with the interaction of constantly changing organisms, it would seem likely that research which aims to plot these changes over time should yield more valuable information about natural history and causation than single cross-sectional studies. However, many difficulties attend longitudinal studies. Whether the study concerns the emergence of 'cases' from 'normal' persons at risk, or the outcome of a 'case' population, large samples are required both to ensure sufficient cases in the end and to guard against attrition. The gathering and examination of these samples imposes such a burden on small research groups that it becomes tedious to pursue non-respondents, and time-consuming if not impossible to ensure reliability between many raters over succeeding years. No satisfactory method of recording longitudinal data has been devised. The various papers in this book, the fourth in the series, must be viewed against this background. It would be presumptuous to expect much to emerge at this stage by way of hard fact, but it is a measure of the distinction of the many contributors that they are able to provide interesting associations and speculations, although these are not always clearly distinguished from causation and fact. Much of the work has been published elsewhere, but it is convenient for those interested in this type of study to have summarized versions in one volume, and most of us who may not wish to buy the book will certainly find it thought-provoking and a convenient source of odd information covering a wide selection of subjects.

JOHN COPELAND

### MISCELLANEA

**Institutional Neurosis.** Third Edition. By RUSSELL BARTON. Bristol: John Wright. 1976. Pp xiv+79. Index 3 pp. Price £3.00.

Russell Barton's small book now bids fair to be a classic, as although the syndrome of 'Institutionalization' had been described before this book first came out (as he himself underlines) yet it did more than any other publication forcibly to bring the condition to psychiatrists' attention.

After a short section defining 'institutional neurosis' in the clearest possible terms and examining briefly the differential diagnosis the major part of the book gives a great many detailed and highly practical suggestions as to how institutionalization can both be prevented and treated. The importance of staff in terms of morale, adequate numbers and proper training in implementing treatment programmes is stressed. Dr Barton gives a long list of references for further reading and offers a word of caution on the need for critically assessing changes which are introduced.

The publication of this book is timely, as the lessons it contains and its suggestions are as appropriate now as when it was first published 17 years ago. Warmly recommended for reading and for then taking action.

PETER BROOK

**Child Psychiatry Observed. A Guide for Social Workers.** By ELIZABETH GORE. Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1976. Pp xv+251. Index 1 p. Price £5.00, £3.25 (flexicover).

This book is a resumé of traditional structures, ideas and methods of work, particularly from the point of view of the child guidance clinics. The sections summarizing some of the current theories of child development, and those describing treatments based on psychotherapeutic concepts, offer more than a summary and are especially useful. The book barely mentions the clinical/organic aspect of child psychiatry, and gives little general structure to the specialty as a clinical discipline. The strong psychotherapeutic traditional bias has led to some selectivity.

I found the section on mental retardation, especially under the 'treatment' heading, disappointing. I doubt if there need be less concern about the recoverability of children suffering from learning disturbance due to emotional disorders, or of these disorders in themselves, in comparison with the problem of subnormal or otherwise organically damaged children. Clinical experience seems to indicate that prolonged emotional disturbance is