The Bowen Family Theory and its Uses. By MARGARET HALL. New York: Jason Aronson. 1981. Pp 305. $25.00.

Techniques of Family Therapy. By DAVID S. FREEMAN. New York: Jason Aronson. 1981. Pp 249. $25.00.

The Bowen theory, unique in its combination of hypotheses from individual psychodynamic and systems theories, is an abstraction of, currently, eight processes determining emotional behaviour in families which, when considered together, enable predictions to be made of the results of therapeutic and other interventions. Differentiation of self is the central theme and, although not acknowledged, is similar to individuation as described, more profoundly, by C. G. Jung whose Theory of Opposites is also exemplified in the tension of the complementary opposites of differentiation and fusion. Familiar also is the idea that individuation of one group member enhances the functioning of all provided contact is maintained.

Another of Bowen's processes is the concept of triangles in which predictable interactions occur and about which members may need 'coaching' in order to individuate. Multigenerational transmission, family projection and emotional cut off are other processes influencing this enantiodromia of fusion or dependency and differentiation.

The degree of differentiation, and, therefore dependence, in relation to the nuclear family emotional system is assumed to be a fairly static entity that determines subsequent extrafamilial behaviour and perceptions. It is the extrapolation of this theory to organizations, care of the aged, women in society and other sociological, political areas that is the particluar contribution of C. Margaret Hall. Although not entirely original in philosophy, or profound in nature, I found this book a stimulating theoretical exploration of the process of individual development within the family and the subsequent influence of this on society, and would recommend it as being of interest to professionals engaged in enabling individuation in various circumstances, from families, organizations, to the elderly.

In contrast, David Freeman's book is intensely centred on the technique and practicalities of a family therapy that sets out to redefine problems in systems terms in the belief that behavioural problems rest within, and are supported by, social systems, and the individual alone is not responsible. Apart from redefinition of problems by questioning old myths and current assumptions, in a learning manner, the essence of his approach is not to acquire insight but to support change in behaviour patterns by discovering how family members relate to, and what they expect from, each other.

The influence of Murray Bowen is acknowledged in a chapter devoted to systems theory and, indeed, in practice the therapist engages with individual family members to enable differentiation. The avoidance of triangulation or collusion, and other obstacles encountered in persuing this and other aims are clearly and thoroughly discussed in relation to the therapist's personal family, his professional 'family' and the clinical family. In other chapters phases of therapy are described and amply substantiated by interesting and apposite transcripts of interviews. There is a useful final chapter on 'Therapeutic Dilemmas and Practice Issues'. It is altogether a practical, comprehensive and energetic account of a particular systems view of working with families, addressed to beginner or experienced therapists.

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Cognitive Behavior Therapy: A Restructuring Approach. By RIAN E. MCMULLIN and THOMAS R. GILES. New York: Grune and Stratton. 1981. Pp 132. £10.00. $15.00.

This is the latest book in the series *Current Issues in Behavioral Psychology* and it reflects the growing interest in cognitive therapies. A short theoretical section is followed by three sections on clinical applications of the authors' own approach, which they call Cognitive Restructuring Therapy, or CRT.

The authors' comment on their theoretical section is that the reader will find it "highly technical . . . and more difficult to read than the rest of the book". I found this to be a depressingly accurate prediction. A number of complex issues regarding the theoretical substrates of cognitive therapy are introduced but not clearly or adequately discussed. The orientation of cognitive restructuring therapy is said to be 'neobehaviourist' but the precise meaning of this term has to be inferred from the sections on clinical procedure. It is evident from these sections that CRT is derived from the analysis of cognitions used by Ellis, and from a variant of the systematic desensitization procedures developed by Wolpe.

Although the clinical sections are indeed easier to read, they are somewhat marred by the excessive use of jargon. However, the principal aim of the book is to offer practical guidelines for intending practitioners and in this it is generally successful. The particular type of cognitive therapy practised by the authors is described in step-by-step procedures. These include useful information about the difficulties that are likely to arise at each phase of treatment. The importance of providing an adequate conceptual framework for the

patient at the start of each phase is given due emphasis. Of particular interest are the detailed procedures by which the patient is trained to examine the objective validity of his beliefs and subsequently to counter any maladaptive beliefs.

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Primer for the Psychotherapist. 2nd edition. By JOYCE A. BOCKAR. Lancaster, Lancs: MTP Press. 1981. Pp 149. £8.95.

The first edition of this book was known by the less misleading title *Primer for the Non-medical Psychotherapist*. The book will be of little interest to psychiatrists consisting as it does in a sketchy introductory textbook of general psychiatry with only passing mention of psychotherapy. Some of the sections offer 'useful hints' in detecting an organic basis for psychiatric symptoms but the hints are aimed at therapists with minimal medical knowledge. These 'hints' are mixed confusingly with an introduction to interview techniques, mental state examination and a chapter on the 'amine hypotheses' of psychiatric illness. The book does not aim clearly at its intended readership when it gives didactic information about prescribing mixed in with sections on basic psychopharmacology. The style varies from 'chatty', (for example, "If the diagnosis is correct and the optimum dose is reached the response in a few weeks is amazing,") to an extremely didactic form characterized by a liberal use of capitals and italics. A book on basic psychiatry aimed at non medical therapists could find a niche in the library of many psychotherapy departments. Unfortunately this volume by attempting to cover too much will not suitably fill that niche.

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Anxiety: New Research and Changing Concepts. Edited by DONALD F. KLEIN and JUDITH G. RABKIN. New York: Raven Press. 1981. Pp 439. $59.40.

Anxiety is not a subject in which there have been major advances in the last twenty years, so any volume dealing with new research is to be welcomed. This book is one of a series sponsored by the American Psychopathological Association and the contributors all presented their work at the 70th annual meeting of the Association in 1980. Although most of the chapters describe work that has been published elsewhere the book gives a picture of recent developments in the round that is valuable in putting them into clinical perspective. There are sections on the psychopharmacology of anxiety with useful reviews of the use of antidepressants, beta-blocking drugs and benzodiazepines, genetics, basic pharmacology and psychology, and a mixture of miscellaneous research reports of varying quality.

The chapters I found the most stimulating were the St Louis group's follow-up of patients with anxiety neuroses, illustrating the diagnostic instability of the disorder and its lack of affinity to affective psychoses, Suomi's account of anxiety in the Rhesus monkey, Isaac Marks' review of behavioural and pharmacological approaches in anxious and obsessional disorders, and Klein's synthesis of ethological, evolutionary and clinical concepts of anxiety, summarized in the sentence "I hypothesise that the protest-despair mechanisms have co-evolved over our species history to deal with the regular evolutionary contingency of the lost toddler". There are also three interesting papers on the relationship between mitral valve prolapse, panic and anxiety, a subject that is little mentioned outside the North American literature. Each chapter is extensively referenced and the discussions after the papers amplify and answer some of the issues raised in them. The book lives up to its title and will not disappoint. It is fairly expensive and the contributors must take some share of blame for this. The 439 pages could easily be condensed into 200 without any loss of information, but in these days of word processors and instant transcription verbiage is all too common. The contributors and editors would have done well to remember Bernard Shaw's apology to a correspondent, "I am sorry to have written such a long letter, I did not have time to write a short one".

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Handbook of Biological Psychiatry [Experimental and Clinical Psychiatry, Volume 1]. Part VI: Practical Applications of Psychotropic Drugs and Other Biological Treatments. Edited by HERMAN M. VAN PRAAG, MALCOLM H. LADER, OLE J. RAFAELSEN and EDWARD J. SACHAR. New York: Marcel Dekker. 1981. Pp 559. Sfr. 160.-.

This is the sixth part of the first volume in the series entitled *Experimental and Clinical Psychiatry*, but it is not necessarily an integral part and it stands on its own as a substantial treatise. In nineteen chapters the intricacies of a wide variety of relevant topics are excellently reviewed. These are concerned mainly with psychotropic drugs, ECT, sleep treatment and psychosurgery, but the variety of approach offers a richness