

Reviews

Your Mind in Their Hands. Documentary series on mental illness. Sunday, BBC 1, 11.25 pm.

Despite increasing attempts through the media to rid psychiatry of its bad image, it seems the layman still views it with an aura of suspicion. There is a need to show just how ordinary and beneficent it is.

Your Mind in Their Hands, a new series of eight, 25-minute programmes from the Continuing Education Series of the BBC, examined mental illness within the National Health Service and focused particularly on the various methods of cure.

The first programme considered phobias and how behaviour therapy has revolutionized their treatment. Successive topics were the patient's first contact with the GP (which might have been better screened first), ECT, a typical psychiatric department of a district general hospital, the treatment of depression and schizophrenia, the care of the elderly, including the use of reality orientation, and rounding off with rehabilitation. Case studies were featured in each programme.

From the opening programmes, the format appeared to be

naming the problem (be it agoraphobia, alcoholism, depression . . .), naming the chosen cure, a quick demonstration of the treatment—and there was the 'cured' patient. There was little that was convincing or reassuring; it all felt rather too slick. Surely it isn't that easy?

Perhaps the most controversial subject covered was ECT. Given this, it was surprising that absolutely no attempt was made to discuss or justify it. Although the presenter, Dr Alan Maryon-Davies, thought it necessary to tell us that we weren't to believe it was a magic 'cure all', it certainly looked like it—the convulsion itself probably made a few viewers sit up and take note. From a lay point of view the presentation did look very uncritical.

But in spite of these shortcomings, which may or may not have been apparent throughout the series, in attempting to demonstrate ways in which mental illness manifests itself and showing how those afflicted are helped through sympathy and understanding, even before treatment, the series should succeed in demystifying certain aspects of psychiatry and showing that there is plenty of good in it.

Bulletin

ALISON CAMPBELL

Forthcoming Events

The **Society for Reproductive and Neonatal Psychology** will hold a conference at the University of York on 27 and 28 September 1982. Papers are invited relating to psychological aspects of fertility and infertility, pregnancy, childbirth, early mother-child relationships, early infancy and post-partum psychological disturbance. Papers should be sent to: C. J. G. Macy, Acting Secretary, SRNP, c/o South Lincolnshire Department of Psychology, Orchard House, South Rauceby, Sleaford, Lincs, from whom details of the conference may also be obtained.

'**Neurological Dysfunction in Childhood**' is the subject of a course, designed for senior registrars and consultants in paediatrics and senior clinical medical officers, to be held in Sheffield (The Children's Hospital and the Ryegate Centre) from 20 to 24 September 1982. Information: Dr Gwilym Hosking, The Ryegate Centre, The Children's Hospital, Tapton Crescent Road, Sheffield S10 5DD.

The 14th Annual Meeting of the **Society for Psychotherapy Research**, an international, multidisciplinary organization, will take place in the University of Sheffield from 6 to 9 July 1983. As at Oxford in 1979, the occasion will provide a rare opportunity for interchange with many leading American and European workers in the field. Information: Dr David A. Shapiro, MRC/SSRC Social and Applied Psychology Unit, The University, Sheffield S10 2TN.

A three-day conference marking the 10th year of the **British Association for Behavioural Psychotherapy** will be held at the University of Sussex from 7 to 10 July 1982. Closing date for applications 21 June 1982. Information and application forms: Rod Holland, Senior Clinical Psychologist, Graylingwell Hospital, College Road, Chichester, West Sussex.

A **workshop on behavioural marital therapy** will be given at the Institute of Psychiatry by Dr Neil S. Jacobson, University of Washington, on 10 July 1982. Cost: £25; students: £18. Information: Dr Michael Crowe, Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ.

The **Association of Therapeutic Communities** in conjunction with the **Planned Environment Therapy Trust** is holding its 3rd Workshop on Therapeutic Communities at Bourne Park, Hildenborough, Kent, from 24 to 27 July 1982. The title, 'Shared Living: Learning Therapeutic Skills', emphasizes the experiential and academic aspects of the course. Cost: £50. Information: Dr Stuart Whiteley, Henderson Hospital, 2 Homeland Drive, Brighton Road, Sutton.

The **International Congress on Psychiatry, Law and Ethics** will be held in Haifa, Israel, from 20 to 25 February 1983. Information: Judge Amnon Carmi, Chairman, Organizing Committee, International Congress on Psychiatry, Law and Ethics, PO Box 394, Tel Aviv 61003, Israel.