

It is, therefore, a sadly disappointing book. The author clearly has had long personal experience of sociopathic patients, but the material is presented in such an undisciplined and idiosyncratic way as to detract from or obscure its potential for contributing to our knowledge of this subject.

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Sexual Aversion, Sexual Phobias and Panic Disorders.

By HELEN S. KAPLAN and DONALD F. KLEIN. 1987. 166 pp. \$25.00.

Sexual avoidance disorders may form a spectrum from sexual aversion, through sexual phobia, to panic. Despite the authors' distinction, their book might strike therapists on this side of the Atlantic either as repetition of what is known by most sex therapists or, in its plea for the use of psychotropics, unproven. Kaplan offers guidance in the assessment and management of sexual avoidance disorders, with the management emphasising, as is customary now, psychodynamic, cognitive, and behavioural aspects. The 'new' aspect they emphasise is the additional use of tricyclic antidepressants in the treatment of the panic disorders. No objective data is offered in support, and the notion that psychotropic medication is likely to be helpful with these problems may bring a wry smile to the face of many sex therapists.

Clinical case descriptions are supplied, but the whole book gives the impression of being composed too rapidly, so that it is poorly thought out both conceptually and in presentation. Only the authors' reputation will ensure that departments buy this book.

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A Decade of Progress in Primary Prevention. Edited by MARK KESSLER and STEPHEN E. GOLDSTON. Hanover: University Press of New England. 1986. 424 pp. £18 (pb), £28 (hb).

The contents of this book were initially presented as papers at the Vermont conference on the primary prevention of psychopathology, held in 1984. This marked a decade since the first conference, and provided an opportunity to review and reassess the past and look to and give direction for the future.

The publication is divided into five parts. The first is a review by Professor E. L. Cowen of Rochester University, which looks at recent accomplishments in the field of prevention and star-gazes in regard to future developments. He supports both person-centred strategies (i.e. development of interventions enhancing people's ability to adapt and deal with stress) and systems-level strategies (which diminish stress sources and develop people's opportunities).

The second part looks at research, including the fields of psychiatric genetics, social stress, risk factors for schizophrenia and other psychological disorders, child psychiatric development and developmental epidemiology studies (which provide the basis for specific preventive interventions). There is also a review of the literature on infant mental health. It is now possible to identify and deal with at-risk behaviour in infancy, although more work needs to be directed at the most effective early intervention.

The third part consists of reports of results from prevention projects that have been undertaken and further ideas for developing more. Work is presented focusing on the element of constituent validation, i.e. ensuring that the programme makes sense to the people who are going to use and benefit from it, which is so necessary for the activities to continue after the researchers leave.

The next chapter in this section is by Professor Caplan, concerning crisis intervention and support services promotion. He discusses a model of primary prevention and illustrates case work with adults and children facing the stress of surgery or death. Other topics in this section include public education and communicating information, self-help organisations, and education involving professionals for prevention.

The fourth section deals with the politics of primary prevention, with a resumé of the supporters and adversaries in the American scene. The state-backed programmes, the national prevention policy, and the Federal viewpoint with the role of the National Institute of Mental Health are also outlined.

The fifth and final part is a summary attempting to bring together the varying themes and aspirations for the future.

The multiple perspectives of primary prevention of psychopathology presented in this book as a result of papers delivered at a conference have been packaged in a style of variable appeal. The keen observer of this speciality will find some aspects of this book of some interest, if he or she is patient enough to overcome the rather lengthy and verbose sections.

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The Psychology of Pain (2nd ed.). Edited by RICHARD A. STERNBACH. New York: Raven Press. 1986. 255 pp. \$34.00.

Sternbach is a pioneer in the assessment and treatment of pain maintained by psychological mechanisms. The first edition of *The Psychology of Pain* (1978) has been widely read. In the second edition, with the same authors, advances can be seen. In addition to psychology there are chapters on neurophysiology, neurochemical processes, hypnosis, and psychiatric aspects