

## CORRESPONDENCE

### AN ISOLATED DOCTOR

DEAR SIR,

One of the loneliest practitioners of community mental health in the world must be Dr Damien Downing, a young man who was recently in general practice in York and now looks after a widely scattered group of islands in the West Pacific. Besides practising medicine, surgery and preventive medicine, he is determined to offer front-line mental health care, since he has always been interested in this field during his practice of general medicine.

In a recent letter to me he has asked whether any colleague or hospital in our field might be able to send him a secondhand ECT machine, because as he puts it 'we could really use it in a small nucleus of cases'. He would also welcome the gift of textbooks appropriate for doctors and nurses who have hitherto had little, if any, experience of psychiatry.

In case any reader of our Journal feels moved to help him, may I give his address:

Dr Damien Downing  
National Mental Health Unit  
Kilu'ufi Hospital  
Malaita Council Auki  
Solomon Islands

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### THE LATE DR S. H. FOULKES

DEAR SIR,

Two years have elapsed since the death of Dr S. H. Foulkes in July 1976. He was the founder of the Group Analytic movement and a creative and influential thinker in the field of group psychotherapy. He founded the Group Analytic Society (London) and later the Institute of Group Analysis and the journal *Group Analysis*. These continue today to develop and to promote those ideas which have had far reaching effects on the practice of psychiatry and psychotherapy in Britain and beyond. In the last war, at the Northfield Military Hospital he gathered about him an outstanding team of colleagues who together worked out how a mental institution could transcend custodial care and become a therapeutic community, heralding the sweeping reforms that have taken place in the past 30 years. At the Maudsley Hospital, where he was Consultant Psychotherapist and later Emeritus Physician, he trained and influenced several generations of psychiatrists imbuing many with his enthusiasm for group psychotherapy.

Many members of the Group Analytic Society and the Institute of Group Analysis and numerous other friends and colleagues have expressed the wish to establish a Memorial Fund. The second S. H. Foulkes Lecture was held this year and this will be an annual event. The prime aim of the Fund is to secure this Lectureship and to continue to present the theories of group analysis to a wider audience. It would also fund bursaries to help people to train in group analysis.

We are hopeful that your readers will respond generously to this appeal, which may be in the form of a covenant or donation. A covenant form can be obtained from the Trust Office, and donations may be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Fund.

MALCOLM PINES

*President, the Group Analytic Society*

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### LEAFLET FOR PARENTS OF STILLBORN CHILDREN

DEAR SIR,

Dr Lena (*Bulletin*, August p 150) suggests that the proposed leaflet might discourage medical people from talking to bereaved parents. Bourne (1968) and Lewis (1976) have described how a stillbirth tends to be shrouded by silence, and have given some of the reasons for this.

Because stillbirth is a non-event, a nothing baby, a vagueness, it fails to fill a potential space in our minds and is therefore difficult to think about. The leaflet will facilitate the thinking of patients and medical and nursing staff by anchoring their vague thoughts about stillbirth, and so enable patients and staff to talk together about the dead child. Actually our definitive leaflet may have an introductory section specifically for professional staff.

EMANUEL LEWIS

#### References

BOURNE, S. (1968) The psychological effects of stillbirths on women and their doctors. *Journal of Royal College of General Practitioners*, 16, 103-112.

LEWIS, E. (1976) The management of stillbirth: coping with an unreality. *The Lancet*, ii, 18 September, 619-620.

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