

psychotherapy means: "an insight a day keeps the insight away". "One must teach obsessional patients to feel, and hysterical patients to think". He regards the patients as feeling profoundly desperate and inauthentic. Munford and Lieberman formulate the matter very differently ("hysterical symptoms are maladaptive ways of obtaining social or instrumental needs that substitute for deficits in the patient's adaptive behavioural repertoire"), and describe well how it is possible to relieve unpromising patients by behavioural methods.

ANDREW C. SMITH, *Consultant Psychiatrist, Greenwich District Hospital, London*

**Phenomenology and Treatment of Psychophysiological Disorders.** By WILLIAM E. FANN, ISMET KARACAN, ALEX D. POKORNY and ROBERT L. WILLIAMS. Lancaster, Lancs: MTP Press. Pp 297. £22.75.

It is hardly to be doubted that the psychiatrist working in the general hospital needs special clinical skills in consultation and in liaison as well as knowledge of the special associations between medicine and psychiatry. There is probably a greater need for books about the former, but this volume is yet another addition to the numerous accounts of the latter. It follows a familiar pattern being a collection of 18 papers by 28 authors on all aspects of psychiatry and medicine, not just the psychophysiological disorders of the title. Much that is said is sensible, much is familiar. Several chapters, including especially those on sleep disorder and obesity, provide useful reviews of modern knowledge about confusing subjects. Most of the contributions would have been interesting in their original format as Baylor College of Medicine seminars, together in print they are too obviously similar to many other recent books. It is too brief and general to be an advanced text, not comprehensive enough to be a good introduction for beginners.

RICHARD MAYOU, *Clinical Reader in Psychiatry, Warneford Hospital, Oxford*

**Couples Therapy—A Nontraditional Approach.** By DANIEL B. WILE. New York: John Wiley. 1981. Pp 229. £17.50.

Dr Wile's book describes his work with couples which attempts to recognize and grapple with the psychic pain of the individuals concerned using insight and interpretation whilst promulgating a collaborative style of patient-therapist interaction. He gives many interesting, clear and detailed examples of his interventions, particularly those involving

angry, withdrawing and demanding couples that illustrate his way of developing and legitimizing each partner's position. Romantic and reactive love, pursuers and distancers are some of the notions introduced which seemed interesting contributions towards understanding couples' relationships.

Unlike much systemic family therapy which he sees as unrealistically aiming by manipulation to 'solve' problems and, unlike behavioural approaches which he criticises as being superficial and morality based, Dr Wile sees his therapy as the attempt to develop a perspective—a kind of mutual observing ego—from which each partner may engage in an understanding of their shared fantasy and metacommunication.

In both philosophy and method what Dr Wile describes is fundamentally an analytic process, involving a collaborative search for meaning, leading to the raising of consciousness. It is also, in my opinion, a traditional analytic process, and it is only by ignoring the vitality of contributions to traditional "depth analysis", particularly those initiated by C. G. Jung, D. W. Winnicott and the Object Relations School that Dr Wile gives the impression of establishing a separate non-traditional, ego-analytical approach.

J. ATKINSON, *Senior Registrar in Psychotherapy, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge*

**Alcoholism.** By MAX GLATT. Sevenoaks: Hodder and Stoughton. 1982. Pp 553. £2.95.

A book on alcoholism by Dr Glatt, who is rightly described in the foreword as "one of the world's outstanding authorities" on the subject needs no recommendation from me. Now in its third edition, and with each of the sections—on dependence, complications of heavy drinking, treatment and prevention—greatly expanded it provides the most comprehensive survey of the many aspects of alcoholism that has yet been achieved by a single author. References to papers published to mid-1980 are common which, given the limitations on time inherent in single authorship, is commendable. In my own field of liver disease the bibliography is representative of the major developments in our knowledge.

The expansion in material and change in format have, in my view, changed the book's potential readership from the general public (e.g. relatives of alcoholics) to those in the caring professions who treat alcoholic patients. It fulfills its latter role admirably but it is a pity that in doing so it has become less accessible to a general audience. They might also be deterred by the rather drab format of the book with its closely packed print on dull grey pages. My only other criticism also concerns the