

may seem to have been chosen rather arbitrarily to non-psychiatrist readers. It might have been illuminating to introduce the chapter by emphasising that these are often disabling conditions and more narrowly the province of psychiatrists than of similar other professionals.

There follow two chapters on psychosocial aspects of physical disorders, which should be particularly helpful to trainees without paediatric experience. The first and shorter of these is on general issues, such as hospitalisation and the care of the dying child; the second goes systematically through the range of specific physical conditions. The eighth chapter covers treatment approaches briefly but clearly, and it is here that the only illustrative case descriptions in the book are to be found. (It is of some comfort too that not all the cases described were unqualified therapeutic successes!).

Next comes a helpful chapter on children's services in general, clarifying the inter-relationships between different professionals and their services and pointing up the similarities and differences and the areas of overlap. The last, all too brief, chapter is on prevention. Each chapter ends with a short list of suggestions for further reading and there is a comprehensive (over thirty pages) reference list at the end of the book.

This is a splendid but very down-to-earth introductory text which, in spite of my initial reservations, I must agree fulfils the specific need identified by its author. I have already taken the opportunity of recommending it wholeheartedly to different groups of community physicians and GP trainees to whom I have lectured recently.

PATRICIA AINSWORTH, *Lecturer in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of Manchester*

Object Relations, the Self, and the Group: A Conceptual Paradigm. By CHARLES ASHBACH and VICTOR L. SCHERMER. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1987. 313 pp. £25.00.

The authors of this book have tried to create a synthesis between individual and group therapy. Psychoanalysis was originally only concerned with the structure of the psyche and its disturbances, and many psychoanalysts have remained sceptical of the attempts of group therapy to treat people within and as a group. On the other hand, Foulkes, the originator of group analysis in this country, after recommending a combination of individual and group therapy in the beginning, emphasised in his later writings the capacity of group analysis to deal with most kinds of disturbance. In this way, the gap between two approaches grew.

More recent developments within psychoanalysis focused on the inter-psychic elements in human growth. Object relations theory and self psychology see the interaction between mother and child as crucial for the child's development. One could say that already mother

and child form a sort of mini-group with its own kind of dynamics. At this point the barrier between the intra-psychic and the inter-psychic breaks down, and the way is open for an attempt to relate individual and group therapy to each other.

Within group therapy the authors distinguish between three 'systems': the intra-psychic, the interactive (the relationship between the individual group members) and the group-qua-group. All three systems interact with each other in a great many different ways, and these are plotted in great detail in a 'group analytic grid'. It is impossible to do justice in a short review to this fundamental and scholarly contribution to an important area of theory and practice.

HANS W. COHN, *Group-Analytic Society, London*

Criminal Law and Psychiatry. By D. POWER and D. H. D. SELWOOD. London: Kluwer Law Publishers. 1987. 265 pp. £50.00.

Power is a former senior prison medical officer, and Selwood a member of the army legal service and a crown court recorder. The main part of the book comprises a number of chapters on the association between crime and sexual deviation, psychosis, psychoneurosis, mental impairment, and psychopathy. It opens with a clear account of the elements of crime, a section on the law of homicide, and a description of exemptions from criminal responsibility. The first chapter concludes with a discussion on chromosomes, which is both misplaced and has paragraphs of the text transposed. The references to the chapter on young offenders have been omitted altogether.

Other chapters which discuss social factors in crime, young offenders, and illicit drug-taking are notable for the authors' anecdotal style and dubious moral judgements. The references are almost wholly out-dated: for example, the major studies on psychosis and crime, and on delinquency, are completely ignored.

The book is overly concerned with the bureaucracy which prison medical officers suffer, and the final chapter on military psychiatry involves such unlikely bedfellows as indoctrination, brainwashing, battle fatigue, exhaustion, assassination, and urban guerilla warfare.

Pages 21-26 contain numerous errors. The prosecution cannot accept "strong evidence" of unfitness to plead, since the matter is always decided by a jury. The authors state that restriction orders are always added to hospital orders in homicide cases and that these Section 37/41 Mental Health Act 1983 cases go to special hospitals. Both assertions are incorrect.

Page 23 refers to "mental responsibilities" where it should read "responsibility". On the same page it states that three persons were tried for murder in 1963, whereas the actual figure is nearer 300. The reference to "statistics for England and Wales" should read "Criminal