

Viewed through non-medical eyes, mutism has been valued as silent prayer and reviled as dumb insolence. Modern medicine has identified various 'organic' brain lesions associated with loss of speech, so that some of those who were once thought mute might now be considered aphasic. However, there remain individuals whose loss of speech cannot be explained by structural damage to the speech organs or the brain. When such behaviour is perceived to be under voluntary control it is generally outside the remit of doctors, except for elective mutism in children which may be referred to child psychiatrists. When mutism is perceived to be involuntary, then 'functional' psychiatric disorder such as hysteria or catatonia may be inferred.

Yvan Lebrun, Professor of Neurolinguistics in Brussels, divides his book into a study of 'functional' and 'organic' mutism. At first this seemed a little strange, as I had never considered that the similarity of the mouth and vagina could account for the predominance of mutism in women, or that laryngectomy, motor aphasia and pseudobulbar palsy were causes of mutism. It then became clear that 'functional' mutism was being described from a Freudian inspired, psychoanalytic perspective and 'organic' mutism from a strict neurological perspective.

What seemed to be missing from this account was the perspective of contemporary neuropsychiatry. There was almost no mention of the major psychiatric disorders which can give rise to mutism seen in catatonia and stupor. No attempt was made to consider how the pathogenesis of mutism in psychiatric disorder may result from disturbed brain function. For example, elective mutism in children has been linked to a lowered threshold of limbic/hypothalamic arousal resulting in the inhibition of voluntary or propositional speech. Similarly, the distinction between catatonic and akinetic mutism becomes increasingly blurred as more is known about the involvement of sub-cortical structures in psychotic disorders.

Professor Lebrun provides charming literary and historical references to mutism. However, this book is firmly in the dualist tradition, and as such is unable to incorporate the increasing evidence suggesting the neurobiological basis of 'functional' mutism.

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Management of Normality. By ABRAM DE SWAAN. London: Routledge. 1990. 234 pp. £9.99.

Subtitled *Critical Essays in Mental Health and Welfare*, this book examines how definitions of 'normality', reinforced by reductionist research methods are used to justify 'protoprofessionalisation', a process whereby everyday problems are increasingly seen as the province

of specialists. It is argued that society is, by this means, shielded from the suffering, and encouraged to avoid struggling with the political, moral and social issues inherent in the distress of others. De Swaan further dissects the complexities of the relationship between 'helper' and 'help seeker', their interdependency, and their inherent conflicts of interest. Processes whereby the various professions stake out and defend their developing territories are examined.

The first section explores these ideas in relation to the medicalisation of extensive areas of life, leading to an increasing preoccupation with physical health and diet rather than, for instance, character formation and social conflict. The existence of a covert agreement between doctor and patient to discuss certain issues and not others is well illustrated in a chapter on "Affect management in a cancer ward". This examines in detail the defensive strategies used to protect both staff and patients from being overwhelmed with anxiety at their shared predicament.

The second section focuses on the complexities of the relationship between psychotherapist and client, and the ground rules and mystique inherent in the process which, it is argued, serves to allocate power and control to the therapist. A final section examines the social contexts of agoraphobia, jealousy, intimacy and the survivor syndrome.

By exploring 'normality' through the dual perspectives of sociology and psychotherapy, De Swaan has produced a thought provoking, densely argued and important book which raises issues which deserve to be widely considered and debated, particularly by those in the helping professions. It is well produced and extensively annotated, although a larger typescript would have made it more comfortable to read.

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Eclecticism and Integration in Counselling and Psychotherapy. Edited by WINDY DRYDEN and JOHN C. NORCROSS. Loughton: Gale Centre Publications. 1990. 88 pp. £6.95.

This slim volume is a reprint of four articles which originally appeared in *The British Journal of Guidance and Counselling* in 1989. The first chapter by Norcross & Grenavage briefly introduces Arkowitz's three main ways of trying to integrate the numerous and diverse forms of psychological treatments. The three approaches are; theoretical integration, (systematic) technical eclecticism, and common factor integration. Theoretical integration is concerned with combining various theories into a more comprehensive, superordinate conceptual framework; technical eclecticism is based on the atheoretical and pragmatic use of different techniques which have been empirically shown to be