

only "suspend judgement". In support of this non-conclusion, it is argued that non-verbal and verbal intelligence tests are equally culture-bound, which is why American black children do less well than white children on both kinds. Colman makes a few disconcerting mistakes, such as calling the Ravens Progressive Matrices an IQ test, thus missing its point as a percentile ordered test of logical thinking.

The book is particularly frustrating to read because the author does not come clean about where he stands. He uses the academic ploy of apparently balanced argument to present his selected references, but balks at drawing each chapter together, either in a way which could provide practical pointers, or even to a succinct conclusion. However, he does occasionally offer shyly, "My own view, for what it is worth . . .".

On anorexia nervosa and bulimia, Colman argues that depression is brought about by them, but not that it forms the basis of the eating disorder. Although he outlines the theory that the current urge to slimness underlies the disease, he recognises its existence in earlier times, and "the question remains open". You know before you read the chapter on ESP that he will not accept any evidence for it, but in his balanced way, he says that one day it may be proved to exist. Yet he does accept that hypnosis works, and describes vividly how he has seen it in action.

Perhaps the task of presenting dispassionate evidence in a authoritative manner, and in just a chapter apiece on subjects bubbling with intellectual friction, is simply too much to ask of any mortal.

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**Physical Treatments in Psychiatry.** By L. G. KILOH, J. S. SMITH and G. F. JOHNSON. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1988. 490 pp. £49.50.

Physical treatment in psychiatry has had only a small share of the written word. Most textbooks say little about the problems which clinicians really face, and the more numerous reviews of published work need much skill in preparation to maintain interest. This work deals with the common and important treatments used in psychiatry today, and the authors set their limits early, enhancing the value of the work both in emphasis and for reference.

The book is divided into six sections. Four of these are extensive and cover ECT, psychopharmacology, psychosurgery, and medico-legal matters. A surprisingly short chapter deals with questionable treatments, and few nowadays will object to the applied epithet 'dubious'. The information in each section is practical, detailed, and well supported by copious but unobtrusive documentation in the style of a review. The text is generous with common experience, lending a sense of

authority and common sense. Despite the considerable range of topics, interest never dwindles, and for its size the book is easy and enjoyable to read. Inevitably there are a few controversial points.

After a stimulating foreword by Sir Martin Roth, there is an absorbing account of the historical background; a scene to reflect on when trivial conflicts over present-day methods of treatment generate political sway. This aspect is maintained throughout the work, as each main section has its own historical prelude. The chapter on psychotropic drugs is divided into subsections which cover the important current issues, and for each drug group an outline of pharmacokinetics is followed by a clear description of their current use in clearly defined illness categories.

The section on ECT is outstanding, presenting a cogent review of practical issues and research findings relevant to modern practice. Areas such as electrode placement, duration of current, modification, premedication, relaxation, neurobiological effects, and mode of action precede a discussion on simulated treatment, a full account of indications in specific conditions, and recommendations for procedure. Similarly, psychosurgery is treated thoroughly and carefully, revealing a rich source of interesting information and giving the impression, repeatedly felt while reading this book, that the authors have searched well for additional facts, viewed them in a fresh light and presented them in a novel way.

The chapter on legal considerations is, at first glance, aberrant, an impression quickly dispelled by its content. There is an interesting account of the evolution of the process of patient consent to treatment, and a well-researched history of the gradual increase in constraint to the use of physical treatment. This chapter illuminates in an indirect and uncontrived way the aim of the book, fully met, which emphasises the importance when appropriate of knowing the physical treatments well, choosing the appropriate measure, explaining to the patient, and gaining proper consent.

This book is warmly recommended as a sound classical guide to modern effective physical treatment. The presentation and finish complement the worthy contents to make the price reasonable by today's standards.

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**Treating Chronically Mentally Ill Women.** Edited by LEONA L. BACHRACH and CAROL C. NADELSON. Washington: American Psychiatric Press. 1988. 184 pp. £9.95.

Hearing throughout this book recurrent echoes of the feminist movement, your reviewer felt he was getting something of a hard sell. Most readers are likely to be sympathetic to the view that "gender role stereotypes