

considerable potential. However, the case was described far too vaguely and there are too many approaches described in the book. This has led, perforce, to a great deal of padding and overlapping. Indeed, more than one contributor seems to need to apologise for the difficulties involved in applying their particular approach to the case. Some 14 approaches are described (e.g. psychodynamic, Adlerian, psychosocial, radical behaviourist, cognitive, and family therapy). In the third part of the book ('on meta-paradigms') the material really seems to take off into the realms of the more fanciful; the approaches described here include 'eco-systems', 'existential', and 'cybernetic epistemology'! The pretentious quality of some of the writing is exemplified by the following: "In this exposition of the constructivist-developmental paradigm, individuals have been presented as active agents who create meaning as they progress in their understanding of the physical, social and moral aspects of the world" (p. 351). Teachers of social work and counselling skills may find this work moderately useful for dipping into, but I cannot see busy psychiatric professionals on this side of the Atlantic finding much to help them in the stresses of their day-to-day practice. Those desiring a concise and relevant account of the essentials of the relationship between social work theory and practice, and more especially as this applies to the UK, would do better to consult *Theories of Practice in Social Work* (eds P. Hardiker & M. Barker, 1981, London, Academic Press).

HERSCHEL PRINS, *Retired University Teacher of Social Work, Leicester*

**Electroconvulsive Therapy.** By RICHARD ABRAMS. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1988. 231 pp. £25.00.

During the past decade there have been at least five books and one journal in the English language concerned solely with the topic of electroconvulsive therapy. This is surely a witness to the value of the treatment. In 1979 there appeared Max Fink's *Convulsive Therapy: Theory and Practice*, and Fink is now editor of the journal *Convulsive Therapy*. In 1981 papers read at a conference in Leicester University were edited by Palmer under the title *Electroconvulsive Therapy: An Appraisal*, and in 1982 Abrams, with Essman, edited another series of studies: *Electroconvulsive Therapy: Biological Foundations and Clinical Applications*. Also in that year, another single-author book appeared: *ECT - A Clinical Guide* by Morris Fraser, a clear instructional manual which followed the Pippard & Ellam report into practice in Great Britain. Now Abrams, a leading American author and researcher, has produced the present single-author text, which predates the guide to clinical practice in Britain, *The Practical Administration of ECT*, just published by the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Abrams presents a useful summary of the literature and research on the topic. A criterion for judging topicality is the proportion of references of recent origin, and the work passes this test superbly: of the 786 references, 24% refer to work published in the past five years.

So, what is new in theory and practice of the therapy? The answer is that there have been no radical changes in the past decade apart from a confirmation of the effectiveness of the treatment. On this point the author is unsure of his ground, referring to a recent spate of studies of effectiveness as impeccable in their methodology yet arriving at different conclusions. Having difficulty in defending the efficacy of the treatment in face of this disparity, he resorts to the argument that scientific researchers pick and choose data to suit their personal bias, a statement which is probably partly true but nonetheless astonishing for its abrupt utterance. He would have done better to underline the many confounding variables in outcome research and then rely on the meta-analysis of Janicak which pointed to the overwhelming evidence for effectiveness; for some reason he quotes that author only in the context of the laterality controversy.

On the topic of placement, Abrams comments that the introduction of unilateral ECT is the greatest technical advance since the introduction of the treatment; however, the greatest technical advance will probably prove to be the introduction of pulse wave delivery, reducing unwanted dysmnesia and so rendering the uncertain procedure of unilateral placement unnecessary.

The use of double ECT - two treatments in one session - is said to be a not unusual procedure in severely disturbed states; if so, and if it produces rapid relief of severe disturbance, then it is worth more attention than the one reference supplied.

Premedication with atropine is still advocated, although this is an unpleasant and unnecessary procedure. The author points out that ECT should be given more frequently on an out-patient basis, but states that this is seldom done in the United States; perhaps the College's guide on British practice, with its recommendation of an information leaflet, will modify that omission of a useful procedure in the United States also.

This book is recommended to those who wish for a convenient collection of the recent studies on the topic. It is not a useful guide for clinicians, at any rate on this side of the Atlantic.

R. P. SNAITH, *Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, St James's University Hospital, Leeds*

**Jungian Child Psychotherapy.** Edited by MARA SIDOLI & MIRANDA DAVIES. London: H. Karnac (Books) Ltd. 1988. 286 pp. £14.95.

The aims of the editors of this collection of papers were twofold: to pay tribute to Michael Fordham's creative

and pioneering work in theory and practice of Jungian child psychotherapy, and to introduce the reader to Jungian child psychotherapy, a relatively recent development in analytical psychology. Originally it was thought that child neurosis was a consequence of parental psychopathology. Fordham expanded Jung's ideas about archetypes, the self, and individuation to apply to the child, particularly the archetypes of the collective unconscious. The authors practise in several different countries and, with the exception of the article on 'Sand play therapy with a psychotic child', they quote extensively from both Jung and Fordham. In addition to other shared references they list a wide selection of Jungian writers and writers from other disciplines, such as Bion, Meltzer, Klein, Winnicott, Bick, and D. H. Lawrence.

Fordham makes a substantial contribution at the beginning of the book in discussing the difference between the Jungian and Freudian approach to child psychotherapy. He emphasises the importance of acknowledging the real child in the real world as well as the symbolic internal child. The papers are arranged in a general developmental pattern. For example, an article early in the book uses infant observation as the basis to expand the concept of primal self and defences of the self, which are both purposeful for survival, but may be at great cost to emotional and psychological growth. Later in the book are articles about the treatment of a child approaching puberty and the treatment of an adolescent. Where similar concepts are used differently they enhance the sense of each therapist being an individual and using this uniqueness to relate empathically to each child. I felt that where the same concepts were stated in several articles the repetition helped to clarify the concepts.

Among the collection of themes discussed were playing and the growth of imagination, primal scene anxieties, individuation in the first half of life, acting out, acting in, and the resultant management problems.

Although the writers have a great deal of experience between them the book conveys a sense of an ongoing and dynamic learning process. This book is of a high standard, and is particularly valuable for those working with children in a wide range of settings.

ELIZABETH GEE, *Analytical Psychologist*

**Etiology of Dementia of Alzheimer's Type.** Edited by A. S. HENDERSON and J. H. HENDERSON. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. 1988. 251 pp. £32.95.

Over recent years, dementia of Alzheimer's type (DAT) has unquestionably become 'sexy'. A combination of epidemiological constraints (the 'greying' of the Western World), chemical discoveries (cholinergic deficits), and other less easily definable factors have forced the scientific and lay community to sit up and beg.

Dahlem Conferences in general gather scientists of different disciplines together, and set them to review the state of research and to write group reports with a view to improving international co-operation and signposting future enquiries. This Dahlem Conference in particular was a response to the growing interest in DAT.

Each group report is preceded by reviews which form its heuristic data base. The reports themselves are concerned with risk factors, symptomatology, cellular pathobiology, and the relationship of DAT to normal ageing. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the cellular level is the important one. The key questions are such as, why is amyloid deposited in plaque cores? What are the genetic or environmental determinants of plaque and tangle formations? Readers interested in the progress of basic research will find this book an excellent and handy review. Individual papers are concise, and well presented and edited, and lists of sources are comprehensive. A real sense of excitement is generated by scientists of different disciplines trying to indicate an answer to the riddle within a particular area of research, but the need to co-operate never cedes to interdisciplinary rivalry. The group reports do seem to highlight the key questions, even if no satisfactory answers are yet available. The approach to future research is properly dialectic: e.g. amyloid deposition disrupts synaptic structure, versus neuritic degeneration causes reactive amyloid deposition. Readers must await the synthesis, but this book will help them to know how things are going. Some may even find it useful in deciding whether to dispose of all the aluminium saucepans!

ROBIN JACOBY, *Consultant Psychiatrist, Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospital, London*

**Community Care in Practice—Services for the Continuing Care Client.** Edited by ANTHONY LAVENDER and FRANK HOLLOWAY. Chichester: John Wiley. 308 pp. £11.95.

Community care is a difficult and contentious issue, and its quality is highly variable up and down the country. There are differing views of both its theory and its practice. This book contains excellent chapters which address these issues. Unfortunately it is not, in the main, an honest account of present community care—it is more of an ideological tract. There is, throughout, the implicit assumption that community care is a Good Thing and mental hospitals a Bad Thing. This is finally explicitly stated in the last paragraph: "The contributors to this book . . . are united in the belief that better services can be provided. The inevitable decline of an outmoded system of care offers an opportunity that must not be lost".

The book comprises sections on planning community services, the components of community care, and the evaluation of community care in action. Despite the