

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.

JOAN FREEMAN, *Department of Education, University of Manchester*

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.

JOHN POLLITT, *Honorary Consulting Physician in Psychological Medicine, St Thomas' Hospital, London*

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

permeate all areas of our lives" and need to be challenged. But not all will be convinced that the relentless pursuit of the "gender differences in patient careers" is finally a constructive exercise. Both male and female long-stay patients have so many unsolved problems in common that emphasis on the special needs of women may well risk the wider thrust of reform.

Yet this is an attractively produced book, and it has a number of important things to say about mentally ill women and their care. For example, in the USA, women constitute nearly two-thirds of the chronically mentally ill; they are said to have a later onset of schizophrenia and require smaller doses of neuroleptics in early adult life; and it is suggested that the roles of oestrogen and brain laterality play a part in gender differences in the major psychoses. The so-called 'greying of America' is also mentioned – i.e. the increasing number of elderly with disproportionately more women – and this phenomenon is already causing problems in other countries.

Some unhappy results of 'deinstitutionalisation' and 'admission diversion' are discussed and illustrated with examples. The all-too-familiar inadequacy of community resources is highlighted, and there is criticism of services marked by excessive regulation and rigidity which therefore fail to meet the needs of those mentally ill women who are pregnant, suffer from physical disabilities, or abuse drugs or alcohol.

This book, then, provides a worthwhile survey of the service needs of chronically mentally ill women and will not be read by male psychiatrists without an occasional stab of guilt. Unfortunately, some of the writing tends to be turgid and jargon-ridden. There are impressive lists of references.

J. K. W. MORRICE, *Honorary Fellow, Department of Mental Health, Aberdeen University.*

Diagnostic Issues in Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. Edited by DAVID M. GARNER and PAUL E. GARFINKEL. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1988. 228 pp. \$25.00.

Anyone who has attempted research into eating disorders will be aware of the difficulties of diagnosis or classification of these problems, particularly for bulimia, which at one end of the spectrum merges with anorexia and at the other becomes similar to compulsive eating in obesity. A volume which addresses these and other diagnostic issues is therefore welcome, and Garner and Garfinkel, themselves eminent in the field, have put together a useful selection of papers. Russell begins with a discussion of bulimia nervosa as a diagnostic entity, pointing out the limitations of classifications based on symptomatology alone and the difficulty of applying a strict dividing line between anorexia and bulimia. The

next chapter briefly reviews the thinking behind the recent revision to DSM-III criteria for bulimia, before Fairburn and Garner's two chapters which stress the central role of attitude to shape and weight and go on to argue that anorexia should be distinguished from bulimia on the basis of whether there is a complete restriction of eating, rather than the extent of weight loss which results. The remaining three chapters review the links between depression and eating disorders, the influence of personality factors and the occurrence of anorexia and bulimia nervosa in males. Finally, there are useful appendices which detail the diagnostic criteria which have been proposed by various authors and bodies over the years.

At the end of this fairly short book, questions still remain about the most useful way to classify individuals with eating problems. However, one at least has the sense of being clear about the issues involved, the definitions proposed to date, and the potential value of greater unanimity in the field of diagnosis.

KEN GORDON, *Top Grade Psychologist, Winchester Health Authority*

The Psychobiology of Bulimia. Edited by JAMES L. HUDSON and H. G. POPE. Washington: American Psychiatric Press. 1987. 267 pp. £15.00.

Medical Aspects of Anorexia Nervosa. By S. BHANJI and D. MATTINGLY. London: John Wright. 1988. 150 pp. £22.00.

Although the editors of *The Psychobiology of Bulimia* have a strong reputation for views about the links between bulimia and depression and the use of antidepressants, I was impressed by the lack of polemics in this review of the biological factors in bulimia and by the individual authors' refreshing frankness about the limitations of their hypotheses. I found the chapters to be well written and easy to read. The book covers its title subject well, and in 14 chapters gives a balanced view of the present state of knowledge. This includes a review of abnormalities of neurotransmitter function, endocrine changes, and metabolic disturbance. Contrasts are drawn between bulimia and anorexia nervosa, depressive disorders, seasonal affective disorders, and anxiety states.

Searching for criticisms of this book, I would perhaps have to comment on its concentration on DSM-III bulimia, with no contrast drawn with bulimia nervosa. In addition, the book completely ignores social and psychological aspects of bulimia, although admittedly such factors are outside the scope of the title.

In contrast, *Medical Aspects of Anorexia Nervosa* is a book which tends to stray from its title. The central nine chapters can be applauded for covering the medical findings in anorexia nervosa with a detailed and complete review of the literature, and with the authors'