

Book Reviews

Editor: Sidney Crown

A Handbook of Neuropsychological Assessment. Edited by J. R. CRAWFORD, D. M. PARKER and W. B. MCKINLAY. Hove: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 1992. 454 pp. £40.00.

It can be difficult to be absolutely fair in reviewing a book such as this. The introduction to this multi-author volume states that it is primarily aimed at the specialising clinical psychologist, or as an introduction to the field for trainee clinical psychologists. Unfortunately, I am neither and can only comment on its relevance to a practising psychiatrist. I cannot find neuropsychology explicitly defined within its covers but the clinical conditions covered suggest it to mean those with a definite organic pathology and so specialists in these fields are especially well served. Without doubt, this situation owes as much to what tasks we, in our cognate discipline, ask neuropsychologists to undertake as it does to their own particular interests.

The volume is divided into four sections. The first aims to cover fundamental issues and opens with a chapter dealing with the basic methods of psychological assessment. This is followed by chapters on measures of intelligence and laterality, both which could equally well have fitted into the second section on the major psychological functions. Crawford's essay on the use (and the potential for abuse) of the Wechsler scales is clear, and he follows this with a discussion of tests estimating premorbid IQ. The National Adult Reading Test rightly is given pre-eminence, being simple, reliable, and widely applicable. (For instance, it has recently been shown to be a useful estimate of premorbid function in schizophrenia, a condition about which this book has disappointingly little to say, although it could be argued that it has as much right to be included as the other clinical disorders.)

The second section, at over 200 pages in length, comprises half the book, and topics range from a full discussion of the assessment of memory and its disorders, through unilateral neglect, language, and its dysfunction, to chapters on attention and frontal lobe impairment. These are not just compendiums of tests but contain critical analyses of their functional basis and their pertinence to the questions addressed. They are as useful as individual short synopses of the areas concerned as they are at forming part of the book as a whole and, with their up to date bibliographies, are

excellent introductory pointers to the more detailed literature.

The third section is on the assessment of major clinical disorders, meaning the organic dementias, substance abuse, cerebrovascular disease, and the sequelae of head injury. Although there is much here for the psycho-geriatrician and the liaison psychiatrist, it would have been nice and rather topical to see a chapter on the neuropsychological assessment of those infected with the human immunodeficiency virus rather than a small paragraph buried within the discussion of alcohol, psychoactives, volatiles and neurotoxins.

Finally, a group of chapters deal with specialised assessment techniques. McKinlay's discussion on compensation cases contains a précis on both how to handle court reports and how to handle court lawyers that is germane of all called to give expert evidence, an area usually completely ignored both in clinical texts and in clinical training.

All said and done, this is a useful book. Psychiatrists would probably find it more helpful to dip into various chapters than to attempt to read it through. A good testimonial to its importance to my clinical psychology colleagues is the copy that already graces the shelves of our financially squeezed psychiatric library.

WALTER J. MUIR, *Lecturer, Edinburgh University
Department of Psychiatry, Royal Edinburgh Hospital,
and the MRC Human Genetics Unit, Edinburgh*

Women Murdered by the Men they Loved. By CONSTANCE A. BEAN. New York: Harrington Park Press. 1992. 187 pp. US \$12.95.

This book has an index and a list of some 105 references so that it has some claim to be an academic discourse. Closer inspection, however, shows that it is newspapers and books about particularly well publicised murders that the author has drawn upon rather than the criminological or psychiatric literature, and it is therefore the lurid cover which is the best guide to the contents.

The author is an expert in health education and child-birth. This book gives the impression that, having suddenly discovered wickedness, the author was unable to contain her feelings of horror and outrage and poured

them out in a style reminiscent of tabloid journalism or at best the *Reader's Digest*. True, she has enough to write about: in 1988 in the USA there were 1075 women murdered by their husbands and 517 by their boyfriends. Love was blind, loyalty misplaced, and warnings unheeded, but this surely is not new. As far as I can tell she has made no attempt to look at a random sample of these murders, still less study psychiatric reports or interview the perpetrators.

What then can one learn from this book? Interspersed among the cases are a variety of explanations, the author's favourite being the pathological need of some men to control their wives. In support of this she provides a two-page list of examples of controlling behaviour, but which of these predicts the ultimate tragedy is not clear. Jealousy is covered in three pages and the conscienceless psychopath in little more, while alcohol is hardly mentioned. Nor is there any discussion of the woeful inadequacy which usually lies at the heart of the personalities of these men.

One cannot recommend this book for its academic contents but it does no harm to be reminded that life has its tragedies and that the world would be a better place if more men were able to control themselves in the privacy of their homes.

DAVID TIDMARSH, *Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, Broadmoor Hospital, and Honorary Senior Lecturer, Institute of Psychiatry, London*

Symbols of the Soul: Therapy and Guidance Through Fairy Tales. By BIRGITTE BRUN, ERNST W. PEDERSON and MARIANNE RUNBERG. London: Jessica Kingsley. 1993. 136 pp. £19.95.

The aim of this book is to show how fairy tales can be used in therapy in a number of ways. All three authors work at a large psychiatric hospital in Denmark: Birgitte Brun and Marianne Runberg are clinical psychologists whereas Ernst Pederson is a hospital chaplain.

Within the context of the book the authors set themselves a number of tasks; these include a discussion of fairy tales as symbols, showing how they might be applied in psychotherapy and illustrating their work with two detailed case descriptions (using 'Peter Pan' and 'Pinocchio' as the 'fairy tales' in question). Ernst Pederson gives an account of fairy-tale 'readings' in a group setting with in-patients, and there is a well written chapter on the treatment of emotionally deprived children. The book ends with a glossary of meanings behind assorted characters and symbols that crop up in fairy tales, together with a useful bibliography.

There are a number of valuable aspects to this book: the introductory chapters and the aforementioned discussion of therapy with emotionally deprived children are clear and worth reading. Ultimately, however, the

book struggles to find itself a niche, being neither a definitive guide to fairy tales, nor a useful psychotherapy text. The glossary is too brief to be of real value, while the case reports, although detailed and interesting, do not in themselves merit the purchase price. Some readers may also be discouraged by the authors' belief that long-term psychotherapy can 'cure' patients with psychotic disorders. The cases are chosen to illustrate this conviction.

Readers interested in this area of therapy will find more comprehensive texts available. This book would be worth considering if issued in paperback at a more realistic price.

ANDREW WEAVER, *Locum Consultant Adolescent Psychiatrist, Adolescent Unit, Prestwich Hospital, Manchester*

The Power of Form: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Aesthetic Form (expanded edn). By GILBERT J. ROSE. Madison, Connecticut: International Universities Press. 1992. 262 pp. US \$24.95.

Gilbert Rose has written this book about artistic form from his point of view as a practising psychoanalyst. It first appeared in 1980 and has been republished in an expanded form.

An introduction by the academic painter Andrew Forge draws attention to the unsatisfactory nature of Freud's views on aesthetic form, as "no more than an envelope for the more dangerous content concealed within". Another recent book, *Music and the Mind* by Anthony Storr (which covers some of the same ground as this book and makes use of a number of the same sources), gives a useful critical account of Freud's view that "all forms of art and literature are sublimations of unsatisfied libido". Rose himself makes it plain that he wishes to move "the traditional focus of psychoanalytic aesthetics away from regression, content, and the motivations of early childhood toward forms of adaptive orientation to a fluid, present reality in the light of the past".

He deals with the creative impulse and the growth of the self which are seen as arising from the earliest phases of psychological development in which there is no apparent boundary between self and the outside world. From the mother-child interaction a boundary emerges and the infant 'creates' identity and outside reality. Creative work perpetuates the child's probing of reality. The artist resamples the undifferentiated stage of psychological development and negotiates new formulations of reality.

Rose relates the structure of aesthetic form and experience to the body (the model we use to construct the world as a whole) and to the interplay between primary and secondary process thinking (which he