

suicidal melancholic? The tentative answer was further questions: who really made who come to whom and why, who made whom the expert arbiter, off which hooks does who let whom off by being a psychiatrist defending concepts of illness, which issues in society are avoided, etc. etc. Szasz, though, pessimistically conceded that people won't give up the concept of mental illness, so psychiatrists will treat them. Without a clear definition Clare seemed to assert that doctors (psychiatrists) should listen to Szasz but must limit themselves as doctors to treating (mental) diseases. All agreed many problems are nevertheless political and religious and over-medicalised.

Sections two and three on Community Care Elly Jansen introduces by confessing that psychiatrists are useful when radical because they alone have special power in the Realpolitik to change their own dominating role. Mosher's favourable summary of the Italian experiment follows, then there is a very human piece by Jean Vanier on L'Arche, and a shrill appeal from the backstreets of Scotland by Jimmy Boyle facing up to humbug spoken about and done for heroin addicts.

This little book continues by packing in many more easily read, overtly sociopolitical and Antipodean comments on community care. It all represents a well-deserved and well-organised tribute to Elly Jansen and the Richmond Fellowship for a quarter of a century's contribution to the theory and practice of something ill-demarcated but closely related conceptually to psychiatry. For this area the Fellowship clearly remains an important forum for debates, as well as a refuge for our clients.

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The Misuse of Alcohol, Crucial Issues in Dependence, Treatment and Prevention. Edited by NICK HEATHER, IAN ROBERTSON AND PHIL DAVIES on Behalf of the New Directions in the Study of Alcohol Group. London: Croom Helm. 1985. Pp. 284. £19.95.

Anyone who travels the circuit of alcohol conferences will know the authors of this book and be familiar with their views. They may be Members of the New Directions Group and hopefully they will have bought a copy of this book. If they have not they should get a copy immediately.

For those of us who don't travel the circuit or who are new to it, like me, then this book is a must. The New Directions Group consists of individuals involved in treatment, education or research in the area of alcohol use and misuse. The Group has no particular axe to grind but is at the forefront of exploring new ideas about alcohol. These new ideas are reflected in the three themes in the book: changes in how we understand harmful drinking behaviour ('dependence'); changes in our confidence that drinking behaviour can be effectively modified in the traditional context of treatment; and changes in our understanding of the effective prevention of harmful drinking.

The first section, on dependence, does not provide any answers. However, it gives us plenty of information and diverse views so that we can make up our own minds about the usefulness of the 'alcohol dependence syndrome'.

Is it theoretically sound, or is it the 'disease theory of alcoholism' in a new guise?

The second section, on treatment, is a bit repetitive, with authors from different backgrounds saying much the same thing. The message, however, is clear. Before we can answer the question as to whether or not treatment works we need to understand the client's needs and we need an analysis of the therapist-client relationship.

The third section on prevention is the most important and the clearest part of the book. The public health approach to the prevention of alcohol problems is succinctly argued by Bill Saunders. The mess of recent Health Education Council Campaigns concerning alcohol and the lessons to be learnt are honestly described by Anthony Thorley.

Alan Maynard completes his chapter on economic measures in preventing drinking problems by quoting from Mao Tse-Tung: 'Complacency is the enemy of study. We cannot really learn anything until we rid ourselves of complacency. Our attitude towards ourselves should be "to be insatiable in learning" and towards others "to be tireless in teaching"'. This book goes a long way in following Mao Tse-Tung's advice.

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Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology. By MAGDA CAMPBELL, WAYNE H. GREEN and STEPHEN I. DEUTSCH. London: Sage Publications. 1985. Pp. 167 £19.75 (hb), £10.00 (pb).

The prescription of medication in the treatment of psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents is a considered decision and seldom made in isolation from other therapeutic interventions. It is a pity, therefore, that this book, the second volume of six in a series on Developmental Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry, concentrates solely on psychopharmacology rather than the broader issue of the place of medication in comprehensive treatment programmes. It appears that this was not in the author's brief and they accept this limitation in their work.

The main body of the book consists of five chapters, each devoted to a particular drug or class of drugs. The authors build up the case for the use of medication, in particular diagnoses, by reviewing a large number of studies. I was pleased to see that the case in favour is balanced, in each chapter, by discussion of the contraindications and untoward effects. The first chapter of the book provides a useful introduction to the field with a description of aspects of research methodology giving emphasis to those issues particularly relevant to the field of child and adolescent psychiatry.

The authors achieve the goals they were set. The fact that the subject matter concerns only one therapeutic option reduces the clinical usefulness of the volume. However, the interested reader could make use of the book as a reference source on child and adolescent psychopharmacology.

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