

but most of all the nuggets of wisdom he dispenses which make uncommon good sense. I disliked his poetic extravagance on the qualities he sees as desirable in a good group therapist; most of them must be pretty ordinary people.

Therapists with group experience will surely enjoy and be stimulated by this book. Parts will infuriate, but where better to fight an old friend than in a group?

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Abortion. By MALCOLM POTTS, PETER DIGGORY and JOHN PEEL. London: Cambridge University Press. 1977. Pp 575. £17.50, £5.95 (paperback).

The title of this well-researched and documented book reflects the unemotional approach of its authors: a gynaecologist, a sociologist and a physiologist, working in birth control administration. Spontaneous abortion is covered adequately, and the remainder of the book is devoted to aspects of induced abortion, technical, epidemiological, demographic, legal and historical, in which a massive amount of data is presented in, on the whole, a readable way. I enjoyed the chapters on the nineteenth century and the illegal abortionist particularly.

The psychological sequelae of abortion are covered in 3½ pages, and there is a short section on the unwanted child; and whilst I agree that psychiatric morbidity is notable by its absence, I would have welcomed a review of the literature in the same depth as that dealing with the epidemiological data.

The demographic data are fascinating to read, and they convincingly support the hypothesis that liberalization of the abortion law transfers abortions from the illegal sector to the legal sector with consequent reduction in morbidity and mortality, and opportunity to improve contraceptive use. The Rumanian experience shows this clearly and is a chilling indictment of the way society is controlled by men in a way which disregards women, or merely sees them as pawns in an economic or political power struggle.

This book should be acquired by all medical and public libraries, and many doctors will wish to buy it for themselves to spend time absorbing some of the more complex arguments, such as the relationship between contraception and abortion.

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The Premenstrual Syndrome and Progesterone Therapy. By KATHARINA DALTON. London: William Heinemann Medical Books Limited. Pp 169. £5.50.

Those who suffer from the distressing symptoms of the premenstrual syndrome owe Dr Katharina Dalton a debt of gratitude for the research and writing through which she has informed those inside and outside the medical profession of this condition and the need for treatment. This concise, well-arranged book contains a comprehensive account of the syndrome based on the author's experience over 25 years. Readers will find the descriptions of the symptomatology of the syndrome, its effect on society, the family and other diseases of particular interest. There is a need for a much wider recognition of the effects of cyclical hormone changes and disturbances, but equally for caution that too much is not attributed to them.

The book also describes progesterone therapy and other conditions for which the author considers it appropriate. She advocates its use in recurrent abortion and toxæmia of pregnancy, although there is no valid scientific evidence to justify this and it encourages patients to seek or expect treatment at a time when physicians are rightly cautious about giving any therapy in the interests of foetal safety. A number of other topics are covered, some inadequately including adjustment of menstruation, dysmenorrhoea and the menopause.

The book is of value for the description of the syndrome and its relation to behaviour and disease but the inadequate presentation of therapy, much of it controversial, is unhelpful particularly as the book is intended for laymen and women whose expectations may be raised unjustifiably.

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Cocaine: Chemical, Biological, Clinical, Social and Treatment Aspects. Edited by S. J. MULE. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications for C.R.C. Press. 1976. Pp 267. £46.00.

Cocaine is a powerful cerebral stimulant which gives rise to little physical dependence. It has been used since time immemorial to combat fatigue (the messengers of the Inca Empire are alleged to have depended upon coca leaf for endurance) and to arouse euphoric cerebral activity (the late Mr Sherlock Holmes is alleged to have resorted to it on occasion.) 'In its pharmacologic action, cocaine', to quote the authors of one of the sixteen chapters by 28 contributors which comprise this book, 'reinforces

and boosts what we recognize as the highest aspirations of American initiative . . .'. The abuse of cocaine is now epidemic in North America; illegal sources from South America are organized, and emphasis on research into drug misuse is moving from heroin or cannabis to cocaine. There is uneasiness in this country lest we travel the same road. This excellent book covers the history, chemistry, pharmacology, clinical and sociological aspects of the subject and provides a basis of ascertained fact regarding cocaine. It is highly commended for all medical and scientific libraries which cater for psychiatrists and others who need to know about the misuse of drugs.

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Behavior Therapy in Clinical Practice: Decision Making, Procedure and Outcome. By ERNEST G. POSER. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1977. Pp 171. \$13.50.

The current trend in the behaviour therapy literature is towards clinical manuals and away from theoretical textbooks. This reflects a growing belief that this treatment approach is more likely to extend its range of applicability through increasing its level of clinical sophistication rather than by producing still more laboratory-tested techniques. By presenting detailed reports of individualized treatment programmes, Poser has attempted to provide some practical guidelines for those interested in practising behaviour therapy with patients who are not obviously amenable to psychological modes of intervention. The case reports of the mongol, drug addict, and chronic schizophrenic in particular should help to convince those who are sceptical about the value of the behavioural approach when applied to a general psychiatric population.

The outstanding feature of the book is the clarity with which the material is presented. Unnecessary learning theory jargon has been omitted, and the descriptions of the methods used could be easily understood by the intelligent layman. Furthermore, by dividing up each case report into sections such as 'treatment goals' and 'therapeutic strategy', the author has succeeded in highlighting the distinctive features of the behavioural approach.

The major weakness of the book is that decisions about treatment methods appear to rest on the author's hunches rather than on precisely formulated

hypotheses which have been tested out systematically. It is the ability to analyse carefully the interactions between environmental factors and problem behaviours, and to use this information when designing programmes which distinguishes the skilled clinician from the technician. For this reason, the book's main value is as an introduction to behaviour therapy for those who are more interested in learning about the approach than in applying it.

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Psychodynamics of Drug Dependence. Edited by JACK D. BLAIN and DEMETRIOS A. JULIUS. Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare, N.I.D.A. 1977. Pp 178. No price stated.

This research monograph contains a selection of papers given at two workshops held under the auspices of the American N.I.D.A. in 1976 and 1977. They concentrate on the personality structure of drug abusers relative to the aetiology of drug abuse, and to its continuation. The contributors are primarily psychoanalytically orientated. The theoretical concepts outlined are of interest; but the relevance in practice of the psychological assessments and psychoanalytically orientated treatment suggested would seem small to most hard-pressed psychiatrists working in this field.

Most of the papers refer only to opiate (mainly heroin) users. Frosch and Milkman present an interesting comparison of heroin and amphetamine users, discussing the idea of specific drug choice relating to personality needs. The multi-drug user, emerging as the major problem group in Britain is given scant mention. Davidson, in an excellent chapter, interprets staff difficulties in counter-transference, and clarifies the need for a clearly recognized clinic identity and philosophy.

Finally, Woody summarizes suggestions for future research, but rightly stresses the inherent problems both of the study population and in assessment of the psychotherapeutic approach. Overall a gallant attempt to focus interest back on the personality underlying a stereotyped problem. The context, however, is within the American drug scene and could not be extrapolated to the different type of patients and clinical facilities in Britain.

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