

Biological Treatments in Psychiatry. By LOTHAR B. KALINOWSKY, HANNS HIPPIUS and HELMFRIED E. KLEIN. New York: Grune & Stratton. 1982. Pp 424. \$49.50.

Drugs and Behaviour. By FRED LEAVITT. New York: John Wiley. 1982. Pp 515. £29.75.

These substantial works might appear to cover similar fields, but the content reveals immediately their different approaches and aims.

The first, a treatise on the chemical and physical treatments in psychiatry has had a distinguished career, already spanning thirty-six years. It has expanded from the early work of Kalinowsky and Hoch, in which the rivalry of ECT and insulin was debated, to the present form, a highly polished, fully documented and comprehensive description of the present status of all approaches likely to be encountered. A useful historical introduction sets the scene.

As might be expected, a substantial part is concerned with chemical treatment, but it is written with a clinical purpose, and the reader is also introduced to the clinical trial, pharmacology and the fate of drugs and the relevance of plasma levels. The descriptions of psychotropic drugs and their application are exhaustive, while the broad view of compulsive therapies contains a wealth of detail, particularly relevant as a transatlantic view of a much criticised and well defended treatment. There is a thorough review of psychosurgery, and the concluding section embraces the treatment of alcoholic and drug dependence. There is brief mention of less commonly used agents. Among the many approaches included are haemodialysis, megavitamin treatment, electrical self stimulation of the brain, refrigeration, endocrine treatment and sleep deprivation.

The title of *Drugs and Behaviour* could with truth be inverted. The approach in this book differs from that of most works on psychopharmacology, for the primary point of reference is to varieties of behaviour, from which the substances influencing it are discussed. This parallels the order of clinical thinking in chemical terms, and brings to prominence the underlying mechanisms and relevant growing points in research. About half the book is concerned with principles of effects of drugs on behaviour, and drug dependence and its treatment. The remainder, *inter alia*, deals with perception, learning, sexual frustration, aggression, sleep and creativity in considerable depth. In every section down-to-earth analogies are used, and there is a periodic injection of special interest often related to little known applications relevant to clinical psychiatry. The result is stimulating and it must be difficult to read this book without finding a new field worthy of personal pursuit.

In presentation and documentation both works represent the best in medical publishing tradition. Both can be regarded as classics likely to remain usefully in the forefront of attention of psychiatrists, psychologists and pharmacologists for a considerable time.

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Foundations of Clinical Psychiatry. By JOSEPH M. STRAYHORN, JR. London: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1982. Pp 590. £26.50

This is a clear and easy to read introduction to psychiatry aimed at the level of the medical student or early trainee.

A reasonable overview of the major psychiatric disorders is given but the organisation of the book is such that to attempt to learn about the management of particular kinds of patients is quite difficult. Differential diagnosis is also not made easy although the separate chapter on organic disorders producing psychiatric symptoms is comprehensive and clear.

The DSM III diagnostic criteria are used as the basis for description of the main psychiatric disorders which is a useful approach but not entirely compatible with psychiatry in the U.K. The introduction to statistics is clear and easily understood and the chapter on criterion techniques with concrete examples is excellent. However the almost complete absence of coverage of community psychiatry, psychogeriatrics and subnormality would not be regarded as providing adequate foundation of clinical psychiatry in the U.K. For an English audience the book suffers from the inevitable shortcomings inherent in an American textbook, for example I find it unhelpful that all disease statistics quoted are North American. Others are major such as the relative backwardness of clinical therapeutics in the U.S. Some antidepressants in use in the U.K. for many years are newly introduced or not yet available in the U.S. For example referring to clomipramine as a compound having only research usefulness is misleading to a European readership.

An easy to read book as an introduction for American medical students but not one that is recommended for students in the U.K.

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Modern Synopsis of Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry. 3rd edition. Edited by HAROLD I. KAPLAN and BENJAMIN J. SADOCK. 1981. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins. Pp 973. \$35.75

The editors of the three-volume *Comprehensive*

Textbook of Psychiatry (3rd edition) published in 1980 have recognized that it is far too unwieldy a work for most readers—particularly for medical students. Accordingly, they have now condensed it to less than one-quarter of its original length to produce this excellent *Modern Synopsis*.

Some of the original material has been deleted, but generally each chapter represents an accurate abridgement of the text in the larger work and the *Synopsis* as a whole therefore demonstrates both the strengths and weaknesses of its source.

The volume covers a much wider field than traditional textbooks of similar size. In addition to purely clinical topics such as the examination of psychiatric patients, the clinical manifestations of the various psychiatric disorders, psychological factors affecting physical conditions, psychiatric emergencies, psychotherapy and physical treatments, there are a number of sections on non-clinical fields which the editors consider to be fundamental to clinical skills and understanding: behavioural, biological and sociocultural sciences and theories of personality and of psychopathology. These latter topics are particularly well presented and are very likely to excite the readers' interest.

All this will be valued highly by the British reader, but clearly the book is an expression of the American approach, and particularly of the American system of classification of psychiatric disorders (DSM III). This may discourage the undergraduate medical student from using it as his standard text, as may the understandable references to the United States legal system, but for the postgraduate trainee who is willing to accept that the Americans have a great deal to offer, the *Synopsis* might be his choice.

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Drugs and Appetite. Edited by T. SILVERSTONE. London: Academic Press. 1982. Pp 187. £14.20.

This book is largely concerned with the pharmacology and clinical use of appetite suppressants. All its contributors are recognised authorities in their fields. It is comprehensive in its scope embracing both animal and human studies.

The first two chapters review the physiology and neuropharmacology of feeding. There follows a sophisticated analysis by Blundell of the effects of drugs on individual elements of feeding behaviour. The remainder of the book is concerned with humans. There are chapters on the measurement of hunger and food intake, as well as the clinical pharmacology of appetite suppressants and appetite stimulants. Of most interest to the clinician is the chapter on the place of drugs in the treatment of obesity. Munro and Ford rightly conclude that the indications for pharmacological treatment are ill-defined. They suggest that the conventional use of anorectic drugs for a period of three or so months can only be justified in significantly obese patients in whom there is a clear short-term benefit. They argue against long-term use except in cases where obesity is directly or indirectly a definite threat to the patient's health. The final chapter by Szmukler discusses the use of drugs in the treatment of anorexia nervosa. Not surprisingly, he concludes that drugs have a minor role in the overall management of these patients.

This book is a specialist text. It is authoritative and up-to-date, and it can be recommended to those interested in the effects of drugs on appetite. At times, however, it is unnecessarily pretentious and nowhere more so than when psycholinguistic analogies are used to describe the process of feeding. Absurdities also creep in: for example, with reference to the rat it is stated that 'Although laboratory animals appear to have time to spare, spending much of their days resting and relaxing,...all organisms have obligations to fulfil and commitments to meet'. Who would be a rat these days?

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