

Yet it is a flawed work. It rests on one of those simple truths that are neither simple nor really truthful—that psychotherapists should rely on their human intuition and day to day judgment and not be blinded by ideology. By ideology the author means theory. But the author has a cartoon vision of theory as something which is necessarily hidebound dogma—he cannot envisage theory as an act of the imagination, a pathway for the explorer rather than a boundary wall for the prisoner. Nor does he seem to realize that the difference between the theorist and the eclectic is most often the difference between someone with an acknowledged intellectual framework and someone with a submerged, and thereby often unexamined, set of assumptions. Lomas argues fairly against the dominance of techniques (behavioural or whatever) in psychotherapy. But the alternative to applying dictatorial techniques can be to offer *to the client* tools for his or her own use within the framework of the wide therapeutic relationship.

The whole case has been more broadly and incisively argued in David Smail's *Psychotherapy: A Personal Approach*.

Any psychotherapist faithfully following Lomas' guidelines would achieve a composed, perceptive and helpful approach to their work. They would occasionally find themselves with nothing more than an amiable platitude as ground for their endeavours.

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Psychiatric Research in Practice: Bio-behavioural Themes. Edited by E. A. SERAFETINIDES. London: Academic Press. 1981. Pp 244. £13.80.

This book provides highlights of current psychiatric research in selected areas of major interest, and indicates useful implications for clinical practice. It is edited by Professor Serafetinides, who is well known for his pioneer studies at the Maudsley in the 60s, on psychopathology in temporal lobe epilepsy.

There are 13 papers, either up to date and well referenced accounts on topics of organic psychiatry, or stimulating discussions of relevant themes as socio-cultural issues and psychosomatics. While the book could do without 2 or 3 among the last papers, most of the rest are very informative and readable, and each one could be read independently. They include a fascinating re-evaluation of 'learned helplessness' as a model of depression, in the light of recent studies, and excellent sections on cytogenetics, psychopharmacology, affective disorders and lithium, neuroendocrinology and neurophysiology, the latter written by Professor Serafetinides himself.

The book contains enough interesting material to merit a place in every library, and on the bookshelf of those wishing to update their knowledge of recent developments, and trainees preparing for exams.

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Adult Sexual Interest in Children, Personality and Psychopathology: A Series of Monographs, Texts and Treatises. No 22. Edited by MARK COOK and KEVIN HOWELLS. London: Academic Press. 1981. Pp 275. £16.40.

This book is the direct result of a psychology conference which, to the alarm of its organizers, suddenly found itself the focus of national indignation and anger. The conference on Love and Attraction held at Swansea in 1977 gained notoriety when the Paedophile Information Exchange chose to use it to further their campaign of 'coming out'. It was largely the strength of the public reaction to this that led the authors to feel there was a need for a detached account of adult sexual interest in children.

Two main themes run through the book somewhat overlapping the formal divisions. The first concerns clinical aspects of paedophilia and paedophiles. The standard of the presented work is high; chapters are well researched and up-to-date. Those by Howells on aetiology and Crawford on treatment are particularly good. The second theme is that of the reaction of 'normal' adults to paedophilia and childhood sexuality. This is an uncomfortable area. I found myself violently objecting to many statements, but then being forced to examine whether I could really justify my own views on rational grounds or just had to accept them as pure prejudice. This is a useful book which could be read with profit by all interested in psychosexual issues or child psychiatry. With the sombre nature of the subject matter I leapt with glee on almost the only note of light relief, a straight faced comment by Mohr that "even Freud had a low opinion of paedophiles".

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The Premenstrual Syndrome. Edited by PIETER VAN KEEP and WULF H. UTIAN. Lancaster, Lancs: MTP Press. 1981. Pp 121. £8.95.

"Despite the plethora of theories, premenstrual syndrome (PMS) has remained an enigma". Thus opens the preface to this book which consists of papers presented at a special workshop devoted to the subject at the Sixth International Congress of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The inescapable conclusion, after reading the papers, is that this

particular enigma remains as far from being solved as ever.

Yet the participants remain buoyantly optimistic and there is no shortage of confident assertions, a sure sign that we are on thin ice. The currently fashionable therapies all receive an airing—progesterone, in natural or synthetic form, prolactin, pyridoxine, spironolactone—but, as before, the most striking therapeutic finding is that the placebo effect in this condition is often as high as fifty per cent.

Research is clearly being hampered by the use of different definitions of the syndrome and failure to specify definitions used. In addition, more women label their complaints as being due to the premenstrual syndrome than do investigators and a growing caution can be detected in the contributors to this volume when it comes to diagnosing cyclical behavioural and mood changes in women presenting to gynaecological and psychiatric clinics.

This book closes as it opens. The chairman, Pieter van Keep, encourages us all to find the best treatment by trial and error “though our knowledge, particularly through well-controlled clinical studies, is increasing all the time”. It is a characteristic mixture of realism and optimism though whether the contributors always have the two qualities in quite the right proportions is for the reader to judge.

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Review of Transference Neurosis and Transference Psychosis. By MARGARET I. LITTLE. New York: Jason Aronson. 1980. Pp 323. \$25.00.

Margaret I. Little is an English psycho-analyst whose work has received less attention than it deserves on both sides of the Atlantic. Now, as part of a new American interest in the work of English analysts, Robert Langs has edited this collection of her papers, unpublished fragments and poems. She was a devoted follower of Winnicott with a somewhat prickly independence which apparently brought her into conflict with many of her colleagues. This is made clear in the final chapter of the book in which she describes her personal and professional experiences in an unusually frank interview with Langs. Anyone interested in that period shortly after the war when controversy raged between the followers of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein will find this fascinating reading.

Her work centres around two related topics: the analyst's counter-transference and the treatment of borderline and psychotic patients who develop a transference psychosis in treatment. Both of these have become central issues in contemporary psycho-

analysis, and Little deserves much credit for drawing attention to them almost thirty years ago. In a transference psychosis the patient develops a delusional conviction usually that the analyst is either in love with them or is persecuting them. Although this presents serious technical problems for the analyst it also presents an opportunity to analyse psychotic mechanisms which may be of great importance to the patient. Often the delusion focuses on a specific item of the analyst's behaviour, something he said or a special look which takes on a delusional significance and the analyst has to be prepared to examine how his own behaviour contributed to this state of affairs. This is where the counter-transference becomes so important and all analysts agree that a sensitivity to his own reactions and a capacity to recognize his mistakes and misjudgments are essential features of a good analyst. There is, however, some disagreement on how this insight into the counter-transference should be used in the formulation of interpretations. Margaret Little believes that her first analyst mishandled her treatment and this made her especially sensitive to a situation where the patient recognizes difficulties his analyst is having, or where the patient feels the analyst is wrong but is not strong enough to stand up against him. At times she seems to be using the patient as a therapist to deal with her own anxieties and is not fully aware of the danger of a mutual type of acting out where the patient is at first excited by the confidences but later feels he has to look after and protect the analyst from depression and anxiety. While many readers will disagree with her on this and other issues in the book, they will find it stimulating and instructive reading.

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Sleep and Sleeplessness in Advanced Age. (*Advances in Sleep Research, Vol. 5*). Edited by RENE SPIEGEL. Lancaster, Lancs: MTP Press. 1981. Pp 272. £17.95.

Disturbed sleep is one of the commonest complaints with which patients present to doctors. In population surveys upwards of 15 per cent of the population report chronic insomnia. The frequency of such complaints rise steeply with age reaching a peak in the over 60's. The consumption of hypnotics has become commonplace and again this increases steeply with age. The problem of insomnia and in particular insomnia in the elderly, should therefore figure in the concerns of both general practitioners and psychiatrists. In the recent examinations for entry into the Royal College of Psychiatrists, I asked a number of candidates a few basic questions about sleep and its commoner disturbances. Such questions rarely elicited any information from the candidates and often