

Overall this is a useful practical guide for patients and their relatives in relation to lithium treatment of manic-depressive illness. It is readable and well presented and contains a wealth of information and useful advice. It also answers most of the questions commonly asked by patients. It will undoubtedly give patients and relatives a much better understanding of lithium treatment. This should contribute to better compliance and enable side-effects to be identified earlier.

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Advances in Personal Relationships (Vol. 4). Edited by DANIEL PERLMAN and WARREN H. JONES. 1993. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 303 pp. £35.00.

This is the current volume in an annual series aimed at highlighting areas of research development in the field of personal relationships. There are nine invited reviews which discuss theoretical and methodological issues and present original work in the areas of individual and cognitive processes in close relationships, interactions and conflicts in marriage and the family, and social networks and life transitions. The contributors write primarily from the viewpoint of North American academic social psychology. The contributions are generally easy to read, although references occasionally get in the way of clarity.

The nature of social support is a theme linking several contributions. Carpenter reviews the evidence for a general factor – relational competence – as a determinant of individual differences in forming and maintaining relationships, de Jong Dijkstra *et al* discuss their theoretical model to explain individual variation in social network changes following life events such as divorce and unemployment, and Starker *et al* examine social network changes following a specific life event – moving house.

These chapters together thus propose methods for the measurement of individual differences in forming and maintaining relationships, and for measurement of changes in social networks related to life events. The apparently obvious conclusion that can be drawn from them, that social support depends on dynamic interactions between both the individual and the social environment, nevertheless has important implications for the interpretation of social support measures.

Other contributions focus on work examining cognitive or psychodynamic aspects of relationships. Shaver & Hazan's contribution is of interest and describes their development of a model of adult romantic attachments based on extrapolation of Bowlby's description of infant-caregiver attachments to adult relationships.

A helpful feature of the format is that the authors have been given considerable scope to discuss the development of their ideas and methods. However, there is relatively little discussion of the potential clinical

applications of the material and this is a relative weakness from the viewpoint of clinicians. Nevertheless, the contributions are thought-provoking and should help stimulate ideas for further research.

This volume will primarily be of interest to those with a research interest in social aspects of psychiatry. It will be of interest to other readers but its price will probably confine its purchase to academic libraries.

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What Constitutes the Patients in Psychotherapy: Alternative Approaches to Understanding. By RICHARD CHESSICK. 1993. New Jersey: Jason Aronson. 248 pp. US \$30.00.

There is a clear sense of purpose and scholarly drive behind this book. Richard Chessick enthusiastically explores contemporary European philosophical thought in order to understand, from other than a psychoanalytic perspective, the question of what it is to be human. He tells us that "this book is the result of many years and long evenings of intensive study, inspired by the exciting new work that has appeared over the past half-century in a number of disciplines, all seeming to converge on a new or 'postmodern' view of the human". The philosophers examined are Husserl, Heidegger, Foucault, Ricoeur, Lacan, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Federn, Lukacs, Patocka, and Gadamer. Two psychotherapeutic thinkers are also included: these are Laing and Kohurt.

As might be expected, alienation, bad faith, being, existentialism, desire, post-modernism, and hermeneutics are terms which crop up repeatedly in this book. Chessick moves towards a view that psychological phenomena can only be captured by a hermeneutical approach which attempts to capture the patient's own meanings. He argues for a phenomenological approach to patients, in an effort to avoid a naive psychologism based on a false subject-object (patient-therapist) dichotomy presenting the therapist as the final arbiter of reality. Therapy is therefore concerned with the understanding of maladaptive interactional behaviour and helping patients recognise how others experience them rather than being concerned with identifying underlying and malevolent representations carried about within the psyche. Chessick argues that this approach preserves the self-esteem and the humanity of the subject.

The finer sections of this book are the chapters on 'the self', which include chapters on Laing and Kohut. The author clearly knows his subject and writes succinctly and informatively, relating the ideas and theories discussed to the psychotherapeutic situation. The remaining chapters are, I fear, less successful and there is a sense that too much has been attempted in too short a space. Chessick's discussion of the often complex thought of contemporary philosophers seems unhelpfully abstract and condensed and there are few linkages to the clinical

situation, which was declared as the aim of the book. One senses that this book was written too soon, in the middle of a process of digesting and understanding complex ideas. The concepts presented in this book are of interest to clinicians. However, the book will probably be of most use as a reference when one has already read the texts in the original, or alternatively read one of the numerous single volumes devoted to the thought of each of the above figures.

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101 Interventions in Family Therapy. Edited by THORANA S. NELSON and TERRY S. TREPPER. 1993. New York: The Haworth Press. 428 pp. US \$54.95 (h.b.), \$32.95 (p.b.).

This book provides the reader with 101 exciting and innovative interventions that have proven useful to students, teachers and leading practitioners and theorists in the field of family therapy.

Drawing on a wide range of client groups and theoretical approaches, clinicians present an intervention; providing a brief outline of the theoretical basis of the work, a description of the method, and suggesting indications and contraindications of the timing and applicability of interventions. This is illustrated by means of specific case examples. The range of issues addressed is extensive, and includes such topics as eating disorders, marital therapy, divorce work, drug addiction, and adolescence. Interventions include the use of stories and metaphor, rituals, rating charts, cognitive restructuring, cultural reconnection and object-relations-based use of silence.

In addition, the book also addresses a number of topics less frequently included in family therapy literature, such as neurolinguistic programming, psychoeducation, the use of physical touch, terminating with clients, and introducing discussions of sex in therapy. The last section includes consideration of how to select an intervention, including reflection on how tasks and interventions aimed to change individuals from the 'outside' could be received by clients.

The editors state that they avoided organising the book into specific subsections, or providing a detailed index in order to ensure the book would not become a 'cookbook' organised by theory, topic or client group. This seems unfortunate as the book is fairly long, and the titles do not always reflect the issues discussed in each chapter. However, it must be stated that the book is clearly written and provides a sufficient range of issues and interventions to be of use to practitioners of family therapy in a variety of settings.

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The Encyclopaedia of Evolving Techniques in Dynamic Psychotherapy: The Movement of Multiple Models. By IRVING SOLOMON. 1992. New Jersey: Jason Aronson. 424 pp. US \$50.00.

My dictionary defines an encyclopaedia as "a book containing information on all branches of knowledge", as opposed to its definition of dictionary – "a work of information on any subject". By choosing a cumbersome and indigestible title and subtitle, and also suggesting encyclopaedic coverage by the imposing marbled sea-green cover, Irving Solomon caused me to search for what was not covered in this volume, resulting in bewilderment over how the book was organised.

Coverage of fundamentals of psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic history and technique were largely extensively covered – for example the entries on dreams, transference and countertransference – but there were curious omissions, for example although in the introduction when describing the purpose of this book Solomon says "projective identification has conceptually taken the field by storm", there is no separate entry for projective identification, nor for envy for that matter. I could not work out how some particular items were included and others excluded.

Some entries seemed to add little to the obvious conjecture about what they might contain, for example "Visual clues to therapist towards furthering understanding of the transference", suggested that the patient's clothes may suggest their affect (e.g. black clothes suggesting depression).

The author boldly states his intention to incorporate almost all the journal papers over the last two decades dealing with theory and technique, relevant quotes, and to critically examine and integrate the material. In fact, there was far more paraphrase than quotation which at times made for rather wooden language; some quotations contained mistakes such as 'salient' for 'silent' in the entry on the silent patient. More critically, I could not find a list of which journals the author had covered, and thought he must have covered a phenomenal amount of reading for a one-author book: it is a bold claim to make that all important material from the last two decades had been included. This in turn leads to the further puzzle of whether strange omissions are due to the concentration on recent works – how else, for example, could the entry on hating the patient contain no mention of Winnicott's "Hate in the Countertransference"?

Having got over these problems, I think this book does have much to offer. Its strength lies in a well laid out, clear format with most of the entries being of a browsing rather than a densely reading length. The book is strongest on the more clinical and symptom-orientated entries such as "silence of the patient" or "illness of the analyst". There are also rich clinical vignettes which mitigate against the dryness of some of the entries. The entry on termination of therapy was excellent.