

the most fundamental principle is that the candidate should be well-prepared and conversant with his subject through reading and clinical experience. As is indicated in the Foreword to each book, these texts are intended only as useful adjuncts to such learning. They are opportunities for examination practice and formative self-assessment.

Levi has not provided explanations or references because he expects these books to be used in association with the three reference texts which spawned his questions and answers. His choice of parent texts is very acceptable: *The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry* (Gelder, Gath and Mayou, 1986) for the MCQ items, and the *Examination Notes on the Scientific Basis of Psychiatry* (Dinan, 1985) and the *Examination Notes in Psychiatry* (Bird & Harrison, 1987) for the SAQs.

As a co-author of a book of MCQs I can testify to the difficulties involved in trying to generate a battery of questions and answers which are unambiguous, accurate, and at an appropriate level of difficulty. However, these are important touchstones against which such books have to be assayed. It is unfortunate, therefore, that there are lapses in Levi's books. In the MCQ one, although the items are generally of a high standard, the range of difficulty is rather inconsistent. Moreover, certain response options appear to be inappropriate. For instance, "neurasthenia" is given as a possible answer to the stem "Therapeutic factors in small group psychotherapy include", and for the stem "Behaviour therapy for general anxiety states include" the option "anxiolytic drugs" is offered. One can also contest the accuracy of some of the answers. For instance, can one make the absolute claim that with supportive psychotherapy "obsessional neuroses definitely improve"?

Similar issues arise in the case of the SAQ items. The range of difficulty is variable and, at times, the stems are vague, e.g. "List the factors associated with agoraphobia". Inaccuracies also creep into some answers. Levi reports that the prognosis of bouffée délirante is "good" but, to be more accurate, it has a "good immediate prognosis, but often relapses" (according to *The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry*). Also, I doubt if the author really believes that "Complete readjustment [to bereavement] occurs several weeks after the onset of the mourning phase".

In summary, therefore, Levi must be applauded for trying to meet the needs of candidates facing a new curriculum and examination, and for tackling such a broad range of topics. He set himself a daunting task. There are weaknesses in each book but these do not outweigh their potential value to candidates, who need such examination practice, providing that they use the books in concert with the textbooks recommended by Levi as well as with other specialised books.

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The Nature and Treatment of Anxiety Disorders. C. BARR TAYLOR and BRUCE ARNAW. New York: The Free Press. 422 pp. \$35.00.

This is a solid and workmanlike account of current knowledge and research activities in the field of anxiety. One author is a psychiatrist, the other a psychologist, and they have collaborated well in integrating the two approaches. Thus, in discussing theory, assessment, and treatment the authors discuss a broad sweep from speculation, opinion, and data from psychophysiology and pharmacology through to psychodynamic mechanisms.

As both authors work at Stanford University it is not surprising that anxiety disorders are discussed according to DSM-III conventions. Sometimes these conventions can be followed too slavishly; it is pleasant to be able to report that, while broadly accepting this approach, the authors are aware of its limitations and introduce concepts, such as those of chronic and existential anxiety, that are not covered by the existing classification.

A practical, straightforward approach is adopted throughout the text, and this would appeal to the practising clinician. Case histories and examples of treatment response are given liberally, and there are 50 pages of appendices that will be invaluable for those designing clinical programmes for treatment. Although there are many competitors in the field, this book will stay ahead of most of them because of its good sense and practical value. It is definitely worth having in the medical library and, as it is well priced, in many personal ones also.

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Resolving Resistance in Group Psychotherapy. By LESLIE ROSENTHAL. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson. 1987. 209 pp. \$20.00.

The literature on group psychotherapy has mushroomed since Yalom's masterly text first appeared, and there has been a need for an account of some of the particular difficulties in working with this most complex of all the psychodynamic techniques. Rosenthal, who is Dean of Group Psychoanalytic Studies in New York City, is in a good position to address this task. His book is a scholarly review of the literature. Its summary of the subject is comprehensive, yet somehow uninspiring. It begins with a careful account of Freud's views on resistance in psychoanalysis, and proceeds to show how these were developed by his successors, and also how they came to be incorporated into the new field of group psychotherapy. It ends with an interesting discussion of how the countertransference may produce resistances in the group therapist that slow the progress of the group's

work. This is a book which should be referred to by group therapists, but would be of less general interest to other psychotherapists.

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The Prefrontal Cortex; Anatomy, Physiology and Neuropsychology of the Frontal Lobe (2nd edn). By JOAQUIN M. FUSTER. New York: Raven Press. 1989. 255 pp.

This is a second edition of Fuster's well-timed text on the prefrontal cortex, originally published in 1980. Psychiatrists have had an interest in the frontal lobes ever since the classic descriptions of the personality changes that occurred to Phineas Gage after his frontal lobes were destroyed by an iron rod which passed through his skull following an explosion. The sequelae of frontal lobe syndromes has continued to be investigated since that time, and many of the consequences of frontal lobe destruction have direct bearing on psychiatric practice. More recently, the extensive evidence that frontal lobe changes may be seen using modern imaging techniques in such common psychiatric conditions as schizophrenia has re-emphasised and rekindled the psychiatrist's necessity to understand this extensive area of the cerebral cortex.

Those possessing the first edition will want to know the extent to which changes have been made. The majority of these, while having relevance for clinical practice, do not directly bear upon it. Thus, many of the additions have had to do with the neurophysiology and neurochemistry of the frontal areas, much of which is derived from animal investigations. There is thus an additional chapter on neurotransmitters, and that on neurophysiology has expanded by some 40%. The chapter on human studies has been restructured, although there are very few references that date beyond 1980. The 1986 monograph by Stuss & Benson (*The Frontal Lobes*) is quoted liberally here, and there is a new section on imaging studies, which derives largely from the studies of cerebral blood flow, especially with PET technology. The author supports the data suggesting hypofrontality in schizophrenia, and is impressed by the increased metabolic rates noted in orbital prefrontal areas of obsessive-compulsive patients.

Like others who have tackled the issue of the frontal lobes, Fuster has his own theory of the function of the prefrontal areas. He discusses the principle of the insoluble union of perception and movement, based on a neural hierarchy which possesses circular connective patterns forming the basis of the perception-action cycle of cognition. It is central to his thesis that the prefrontal cortex is critical in the temporal structuring of behaviour, co-ordinating in particular provisional

short-term memory, anticipatory preparation, and control of interference of behaviour by suppression of external and internal disruptive influences.

For those who do not possess the first edition of this book, the second is refreshingly easy to read, and provides much valuable insight into our experimental knowledge of the prefrontal cortex. It is perhaps less clearly clinical than the monograph by Stuss & Benson, but can be viewed as complementary to it.

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The Schizophrenias. Edited by FREDERIC FLACH. London: W. W. Norton. 1989. 233 pp. £20.95.

The aim of this multi-author book is to update the reader on a wide range of issues. Its title is a declaration of the contributors' allegiance to the concept of schizophrenia as a group of heterogeneous disorders. Appropriately, the first chapter is by Manfred Bleuler, who gives a lucid distillation of a lifetime of research and careful observations of the course and outcome of schizophrenia, with brief discussions of the criteria of recovery and the changes in prognosis in recent decades. The chapter is a masterpiece.

Andreasen reviews the historical development of the concept of schizophrenia, with Kraepelin as the starting point, and she raises some of the dilemmas in establishing a system of subtyping. A summary of her 1982 operational definitions is given. There are two excellent chapters, by Patterson and Spohn, on the contributions of neurosciences to the understanding of psychophysiology. Their review of the methodological advances in this complex research field attempts to link up-to-date findings with directions in the subclassification of schizophrenia. In another chapter, Linn endorses the view that supportive psychotherapy, with emphasis on relieving environmental stresses and encouraging the acceptance of realistic goals, has an important role in treatment. Information on maintenance medication and the issues of dosage, discontinuance, and relapse rates are reviewed by Linden *et al.* The development of the concept of expressed emotion and its application to studies of family interventions are summarised in a clear review by Leff. Social skills training aimed at improving interpersonal relationships and promoting community adjustment is described by Falloon.

Most of the papers emphasise a holistic approach to the understanding and management of schizophrenia, and, as review articles, they are of a high standard. However, even allowing for the long gestation period preceding publication, some of the information is dated and few references go beyond the early 1980s.