

seems we have an emperor with no clothes'. There was a communal intake of breath and then a big man sitting ramrod straight in his chair let out a guffaw of laughter. It was David, of course, who had no problem at all about being taken to task by a callow student.

Months later, I had to be dragged away from my placement, convinced by what I had learnt from the emperor that psychiatry was what I wanted to practise for the rest of my life. It was an experience shared by generations of similar students who came to Fulbourn expecting little and left inspired by the ethos of humanity, group endeavour and therapeutic optimism that were the watchwords of the social psychiatry movement, of which David was the leader.

The irony was that David himself first came grudgingly to Fulbourn in 1953, soon after completing his psychiatry training under Sir David Henderson at Edinburgh, Professor Aubrey Lewis at the Maudsley, and S. H. Foulkes, the founder of group analysis. He arrived hoping for the interview experience alone and became to his surprise the youngest medical superintendent in the UK, in charge of 1000 patients, many of whom had been cooped up for years in a segregated, high-walled, old-style lunatic asylum. Within 5 years, there were no locked wards, male and female nurses were working for the first time together on the wards, in therapeutic workshops and industrial units, and the hospital and community were opening up to each other through half-way houses for patients and open days for visitors.

Although the diagnostic process remained important, it was to be set within social relationships between patients, between patients and staff, and within the hospital as a whole; the morale of the community mattered as much as individual treatment and, in turn, was key to the welfare of everyone involved. Out of David's practice came seminal books – *Administrative Therapy* (1962, written on sabbatical at Stanford University, California, and bearing the influence of Carl Rogers and Erik Erikson, off whom he had the chance to bounce his ideas) and *Social Therapy* (1974, translated into seven languages), which became the 'bibles' of the Association of Therapeutic Communities, which he helped to found and was its first chairman.

Not surprisingly, David became a world-renowned figure, appointed as a World Health Organization's consultant who travelled through many countries, including Argentina, Poland, Peru and Japan, advising on the establishment and running of mental health services. But unlike contemporaries who would drift away to richer pickings in the USA, David always returned to the wards of Fulbourn Hospital, the scene of his greatest work, to whom he remained loyal until his retirement from the National Health Service in 1983.

In contrast, there were sides to David's life that few knew about. Born into a Quaker family on 28 August 1920 (his father, Alfred, was part of the Somerset shoemaking Clarks and became Professor of Pharmacology at University College London), he was appalled by the Hitler youth camps he was taken to when he was placed with a German family to improve his language skills at the age of 16. He joined the Army at the outbreak of the Second World War and was parachuted into Germany to set up field ambulances. He freely told his friends and family that he did not expect to survive this most dangerous of missions; but did so. In the immediate aftermath of war, he became a medical officer in the transit camps for

refugees, where he was deeply affected by what he saw of Belsen. He was sent to Sumatra to supervise the evacuation of 2000 Dutch citizens from a Japanese internment camp, and to Palestine, where he had his first experience of psychiatry.

David was reticent about his war exploits but was persuaded in his retirement to set them down in *Descent into Conflict* (1995).

David married Mary Rose Harris, in 1946, by whom he had three children. After their divorce, he married Margaret Farrell, in 1983, herself fondly remembered as a teacher and practitioner in the Cambridge psychotherapy department. He is survived by Margaret, his siblings, children, five stepsons and countless 'children' of his inspirational practice. Over the latter part of his life, David saw great changes in psychiatry. There is a hint of sadness in his last book, *The Story of a Mental Hospital: Fulbourn 1958–1983* (1996), for the passing of an era in which social and organic treatments sat happily alongside each other and which had enabled David, his colleagues and their patients to tear down some of the walls surrounding the hospital grounds with their bare hands. But his respect for the human being inside every diagnosis remains, whatever the approach.

Like his family, David rejected formal religion but Quaker values imbued the whole of his personal and professional life. He died on 29 March 2010, and when we gathered for his memorial service in the Friends House, in Cambridge, there were people from all walks of life who had come to voice their debt to a man who placed as much emphasis on patrolling the trackways of Suffolk as he did on the most prestigious award.

David, you were an emperor. It was just that, like all truly great men, you chose not to wear the finery.

**Mike Shooter**

doi: 10.1192/pb.bp.110.031765

## Harutiu Davidian



### Formerly Secretary and President, Iranian Psychiatric Association

Professor Harutiu Davidian was born in 1924 in Tehran, Iran. After graduating from Alborz High School, he entered the Medical School of Tehran University and qualified in 1948. Pursuing his interest in psychiatry, he joined Professor Hossein Rezaee's firm at Pahlavi Hospital for

specialty training. He then went to the Institute of Psychiatry in London for further experience and training and obtained his DPM in 1958.

On his return to Iran, he joined Professor Abdolhossein Mirsepassi's academic team at Roozbeh Hospital as an assistant professor, and was promoted to full professor in 1968. During his services at the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Tehran, he was head of the department on several occasions, as well as superintendent of Roozbeh psychiatric hospital, the first and most prestigious psychiatric hospital in Iran.

Professor Davidian was one of the founders of the Iranian Psychiatric Association and was elected as the secretary general and president on several occasions. He played a major role in solving the social and economic problems of Armenians in Iran, particularly during his service as the president of the Armenian Prelacy Council of Tehran. He was a mental health advisor to the World Health Organization from 1968 to 1991, and was a member of the ethical committee of the World Psychiatric Association from 1977 to 1985. He was awarded the title of 'Leader of Psychiatry' by the latter in 1999.

Professor Davidian was a Foundation Member and later a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He was particularly interested in the cultural aspects of psychiatry and published more than 100 papers in international and Iranian journals. He also published several books in Farsi and English. He formally retired after 42 years of service in 1991 but continued his activities as a teacher, clinician and researcher. His last book, *History of Psychiatry in Iran*, was published shortly before his death, and undoubtedly will remain one of the best references for Farsi-speaking psychiatrists for years.

Professor Davidian was elected the best physician by the Tehran University of Medical Sciences in 1992, and was further honoured by the University in 2002 and 2008. Owing to his immense contribution to psychiatric education and mental

health services, he was elected an honorary member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1991.

Professor Davidian always tried to find time for his hobbies, painting and Persian poetry, which received formal recognition in 2003 when he was invited to join the Academy of Persian Language and Literature. One of the duties of the Academy is to select Farsi equivalent of English medical and scientific words, an area in which Professor Davidian was highly competent. No one who heard him speak will forget his use of Persian poetry when delivering his scientific speeches.

Professor Davidian will be remembered for his warmth and generosity. He was always willing to give help and advice to colleagues and members of the Iranian Psychiatric Association.

Professor Davidian died at home on 12 November 2009 after a long-standing cardiac problem; he leaves behind him his students and colleagues to mourn for a great teacher and mentor. He is also survived by his wife Hripsime and his daughter Shake. Let peace be upon him.

**Reza Mirsepassi**  
**Hamid Ghodse**

doi: 10.1192/pb.bp.110.031781