
Book reviews

Seminars in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Edited by Dora Black and David Cottrell. London: Gaskell. 1993. Pp 298. £15.00

This book is the first in a series from the College aimed as a practical guide and study aid for trainees. Further volumes, covering clinical psychiatry and its sub-specialties as well as psychology and sociology, are on their way. This volume has been written very much with the needs of trainees preparing for the MRCPsych examination in mind and comprehensively covers the field of child and adolescent psychiatry. The topics included range from normal development and the causation of disorder through to assessment and management of clinical syndromes with additional chapters on child abuse and forensic and liaison child psychiatry at the end. For a multi-author book the style is consistent and the only serious overlap of material is about attachment theory, which given its importance is probably desirable. Rather than sections being devoted to individual disorders, clinical syndromes are dealt with in three chapters, covering early and middle childhood and adolescence. This makes sense and the extensive use of case examples and boxes highlighting key points adds to the clarity.

The references come at the end of each chapter rather than at the end of the book where they might more appropriately have been placed, but that is more a matter for personal preference. Up to date research is frequently referred to, demonstrating the growth of work in the field in recent years. The work, however, from the Newcastle Child Depression Study (published in July 1991) is not mentioned and the controversial issue of the status of childhood depression is unfortunately avoided. Rutter's classic Isle of Wight paper along with other epidemiological studies are especially well described. The book covers the matter of classification well (using both ICD-10 and DSM-III-R) although there is little comment about the validity of diagnostic criteria used in child psychiatry. The chapter on treatment is excellent, particularly on the use of behaviour therapy. Family therapy (along with systems theory) is, disappointingly, not covered to the same degree as other therapies. There is a good summary of the principles behind the Children Act 1989, although the new orders relevant to child protection are described less clearly. The final chapter entitled 'Continuities and discontinu-

ities from childhood to adult life' is an excellent review of the research linking child and adult psychiatric disorders.

Overall, the book has been well written although I must refer to a rather daunting paragraph at the start of chapter 3 which contains a 90 word sentence. Indeed, that paragraph scores well over 20 on the Gunning fog index (a simple measure of readability) which is more in keeping with an insurance policy than a readable textbook. The editors have set out to provide enough knowledge to enable trainees to feel confident about beginning to see patients and their families. In this they have succeeded admirably and the book will certainly challenge Barker's *Basic Child Psychiatry* as the most popular introductory text in the field. For a text this size £15 seems reasonable, although at that price I doubt if many trainees will be inclined to buy all 13 titles in the series being prepared.

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Work, Empowerment and Community: opportunities for people with long-term mental health problems. An RDP study of four new work projects by Julia Nehring, Robert Hill & Lynne Poole. London: Research & Development for Psychiatry. 1993. Pp 80. £7.00

Many former long-stay patients refer nostalgically to their work in hospital industrial and service units, particularly to the sense of purpose, friendships, and money they provided. Unfortunately, such work became belittled as institutionalising or exploitative and little effort was made to replace it in the community as mental hospitals ran down: a warning of the ease with which patients' wishes may be bypassed if they conflict with others' views of what they should want, especially if this happens to be financially convenient.

This report deals with a range of efforts to make paid work again available to patients with long-term severe psychiatric illnesses, in attractive and meaningful forms. The projects studied were the first UK clubhouse; a day resource centre which like the clubhouse provides opportunities for paid work in running its activities, as well as a market garden and a workshop with a wide range of activities; and a garden project, bakery and cafe which developed from a general practice initiative. Details are provided of their