

the complete story and an interview with a close relative may add a revealing new dimension to the case. We also see what happens when the therapist asks the patient to keep a diary of her symptoms. At the end of the four assessment interviews the therapist gives the patient the choice of four options (and makes her chose)—no treatment, treatment aimed at improving her self confidence, marital therapy and a behavioural treatment of agoraphobia. I won't tell you which one she chooses. Nor do we know how well she does!

It is always useful to have a 'typical case' available for teaching and I would be happy to use this one. But how? I don't think it is really a suitable tape for private study—not enough guidance is given. I can see it of use as a 'lecture aid' but it is too long to run without a break. I would want a transcript available and stop it every so often to ask the group what they thought.

Interviews don't make gripping television and although the recording is of a high standard I do think more could have been done to make it visually interesting. For example, it would be possible to add greater impact by better use of the zoom lens, cut-away or big close-up. The actor role-playing the patient had a difficult task. I didn't find her very believable and I think she would have benefited from more direction.

To sum up then, a useful tape for illustrating a clinical history of agoraphobia but the lecturer would need some familiarity with the tape to get the best out of it. A transcript or detailed handout would be useful.

Production: Department of Psychology, Birmingham University, and Paul Morby. *Purchase price:* £100 (VHS format). *Distributor:* TV and Film Unit, University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT.

ANDREW MACAULAY
St George's Hospital, London

View from the Bar (UK, 1984, 17 mins)

This is a 17 minute recording made for use by the Navy. It is suggested that following its showing a Naval Officer might comment upon it, and suggest that his fellow officers may care to look out for the symptoms outlined in the film.

The film itself goes through most of the prodromal symptoms of alcoholism and, as the title suggests, the dialogue comes from the bar-tender who illustrates his observations by reference to his customers, who in turn display the early development of alcohol dependence in all its manifestations. For example, there is a young man being urged on to drink more than he really wants by his friends, another who is mixing his drinks and anxious to get in the last round before closing time, and a third who has suffered an injury as a result of drinking. Most of the subjects are young men, but one or two women feature in the film also. The film is not over-technical and is quite clearly aimed at an audience that it hopes will identify with one or other of the early signs of alcoholism shown. To this

extent I regard the film as well-made. The acting is convincing and the material covered is that part of the alcoholic slope which is least recognised as such by its victims.

This would make an excellent teaching film, particularly as these stepping-stones to established alcoholism are often as frequently unrecognised by doctors as they are by their patients.

Produced by: F. M. J. Hiles, MRCPsych (Surg. Cdr., R.N.) and Dragon Medical and Scientific Communications Ltd. *Format:* U-matic, VHS, Betamax and 16 mm film. *Distributors:* Stewart Film Distributors, 107-115 Long Acres, London WC2E 9NP. *Purchase price:* £200.

C. M. B. JARMAN
St. George's Hospital, London

Is Ordinary Life Possible? (UK, 1984, 25 mins)

This production is about the rehabilitation of long-stay patients from a mental handicap hospital (Darenth Park) into the community, a theme that has been well explored in the past. Although it is a sympathetic and convincing programme it does not add anything new, using newsreel techniques that give little scope for imaginative editing. The dialogue is difficult to follow at times and the predominance of Northern accents is somewhat surprising in a Kent institution.

The 'good' (community) scenes are all in bright attractive colour but there is an exceptionally long tracking shot down a seemingly endless 'institutional' corridor that is deliberately inserted in black-and-white, presumably to emphasise an intended atmosphere of hopeless dreariness. This kind of visual bias should really be confined to advertising practice and it is surprising in a Health Authorities' production.

Although somewhat long, this tape would be useful to stimulate discussion in a recipient community, but its teaching value is diluted by the large number of existing films available on this theme.

Format: VHS, hire £4.20, sale £40. *Producer:* SE Thames RHA. *Distributor:* Concord Films Council, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich IP3 9BJ.

T. L. PILKINGTON
Convenor, Audio-Visual Group

A Home of Our Own (UK, 1985, 20 mins)

This video records the reactions of four young women to placement in a home in the community (Rochdale) from their residence in a large mental handicap hospital (Calderstones). It is a very professional production, well edited and with good sound. Although there is some

excessive interviewing of personnel it has pace and it reflects the initiative and enthusiasm behind the venture. It presents some insights into the style of the local nursing (there is no indication of any medical involvement) and social services and it is an excellent public relations vehicle, especially in the local vicinity. The production is not unique however and the theme is not new; the same RHA broke similar

ground in 1957 with its predictive film *There Was a Door*. What Manchester does today. . . . !

Format: VHS. *Producer:* North Western Regional Health Authority, *Distributor:* Concord Films Council, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich Hire. Charge: £5.

T. L. PILKINGTON
Convenor, Audio-Visual Group

London Marathon 1986

Our congratulations to Dr Sidney Crown, a Fellow of the College and Consultant Psychiatrist at the London Hospital

in Whitechapel, who completed this year's London Marathon 26 mile course in 4½ hours. He was running to raise funds for the Mental Health Foundation.

The McHarg Prize 1986

The Scottish Division of the Royal College of Psychiatrists offers a prize of £100 to a trainee who is working in Scotland and who is of senior registrar or registrar grade. Candidates for the prize are invited to submit essays or scientific papers based on their own studies or their original work. It is expected that submissions will range from essays based on literature review to descriptions of clinical work or research in the field.

All entries will be considered by a panel set up by the Scottish Executive Committee and it is intended that the successful candidate will be invited to present his paper to a meeting of the Scottish Division. Submissions must be returned before 1 September 1986 to Dr R. Davidson, Honorary Secretary, Scottish Division, Gartloch Hospital, Gartcosh, Glasgow.

The Astra Prize for Medical Writing

Thanks to Astra Pharmaceuticals Ltd., who have taken over the funding of this prize from Abbott Laboratories Ltd., the Medical Writers Group of the Society of Authors is offering for a fourth year a prize of £1,000 to be awarded in December 1986. The prize will be given to the author, authors or editors of the medical text book which, in the opinion of the judges, made the greatest contribution to understanding in any particular field. Entries must be submitted by publishers who should send three copies of each book entered to the Medical Writers Group, the Society of Authors, 84 Drayton Gardens, London SW10 9SB not later than 30 June 1986.

Forthcoming Events

Cancer Care is promoting a National Conference entitled **Breakdown in Communication?** to be held at the University of Lancaster on 11, 12 and 13 July 1986. It is aimed at hospital doctors, general practitioners, psychiatrists, psychologists, health visitors, nurses, medical students, counsellors, clergy and other interested professionals and volunteers. Speakers will include Dr Rob Buckman of the Toronto-Bayview Regional Cancer Centre, Dr Sheila Cassidy, Medical Director of St Luke's Hospice, Plymouth, Dr Peter Maguire, Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry at the University Hospital of South Manchester and Dr Colin Murray Parkes of the London Hospital Medical College. Accommodation is available at the University of Lancaster. Application forms: CancerCare, Royal Lancaster Infirmary, Lancaster LA1 4RP (telephone: 0524 381820 between 1.00 and 5.00 p.m., Monday to Friday).

Participation is invited in the **Ninth Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology** to be held at the RAI International Conference Center, Amsterdam, The Netherlands on 29 June to 3 July 1986. There will be a symposium on Young People's Response to Nuclear Threat and a workshop on Individual and Collective Action for War Prevention and Peace Building: Constraints, Commitment, Apathy, Pathology. Information: Dr M. Müller-Brettel and Dr M. Macpherson, Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung, Lentzealle 94, 1 Berlin 33-Dahlem, Germany.

The **10th International Congress of Pharmacology** will be held in Sydney, Australia, from 23 to 28 August 1987. The organisers are planning a scientific programme which will identify the key areas in which there is rapid growth. The format will include invited lectures, symposia, free communications, poster sessions and workshops. Information: The Secretariat, 10th IUPHAR Congress, GPO Box 2609, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia.