Book Reviews

Psychotherapy: Research and Practice

The Investigation of Psychotherapy. Commentaries and Readings. ARNOLD P. GOLDSTEIN and SANFORD J. DEAN, Eds. Wiley, New York, 1966. 443 pp., illus. $9.95.

In the preface to this book the editors observe that research in psychotherapy has had remarkably little influence on practice. Several of the selections bear witness to this disturbing finding. Despite the many studies explicitly focused on parameters of the treatment situation, studies that frequently question or contradict the accepted beliefs in the field, what one writer in this collection has called the "functional autonomy of psychotherapy" continues to flourish. What are the reasons for this neglect? This collection both poses the question and helps to provide some of the answers.

A good example of the study that flouts a traditional stereotype is the paper by Lorr, McNair, Michaux, and Raskin. They selected frequency of treatment as their independent variable and compared the results of once-a-week, twice-weekly, and biweekly treatment over four- and eight-month periods. Patients were randomly assigned to each treatment schedule. After four months, self-ratings of the patients on six scales were not significantly changed, nor was there any difference between subgroups; that is, four months of treatment had no effect (by this criterion), regardless of the frequency of session. After eight months, there was improvement on one of the self-report scales, but again there was no relation between frequency of session and improvement. One might ask to what extent this finding has influenced practice—if at all.

Bergin's paper provides another example of unconventional findings that are rarely mentioned. He points to at least two studies in which certain groups of therapists brought about a significant *negative* effect on their patients. In one study, they were the inexperienced therapists; in another, they were those who had a poor relation with the patients ("low empathy"). One of these studies goes back to 1960; once again, one wonders if the establishment has heard.

It is not only practitioners who file and forget research findings; the more disturbing fact is that investigators also do so. The diversity of their approaches and ways of measuring response to therapy is strikingly revealed in this book. One study used as a measure of improvement the patients' self-reports on the Taylor Anxiety Scale; a second depended on the correlation between ratings of actual self and of ideal self; a third developed its own procedure, the Extreme Mental Illness Schedule; and a fourth measured the distance within which a phobic patient would come of a nonpoisonous snake. Refreshing agreement on procedure is found in two studies of depth of interpretation which use the same 7-point scale; such agreement, unfortunately, seems to be exceptional. Considering that practically all the papers were written within a short time of each other, the lack of crosstalk between them is cause for concern. Here may lie one reason why the research is not heeded more; the lack of agreement within the field may dilute its influence on people outside.

Another reason may be the failure of researchers to ask clinically meaningful questions. Long overdue is the decisive study of the therapist's timing of interpretations, for example, or a definitive exploration of the behavioral manifestations of transference. These studies are not only out of sight; they are not even approximated. Too many studies, including some of those presented here, are so rigidly bound by a hypothesis-testing framework that they are unable to discover anything new. A study by R. L. Cutler starts with the postulate that "a systematic relationship exists between the therapist's conflicts and his tendency to over- or under-report the occurrence of similar behavior in himself and his patients" (p. 270). The hypothesis is confirmed (to no one's surprise), but little has been learned. One would like to know more about the process of distortion: what the cues are that trigger over- or under-recall, for example, and how aware the therapist is of these cues; but this study does not provide the answers.

Worthy of note is the growing interest in uncovering experimental foundations for psychotherapy. Much of the traditional psychological literature is now being combed for its relevance to the treatment situation, and the most recent convention of the American Psychological Association devoted a symposium to the subject. One of the papers in the book, by A. P. Goldstein, brings into relation an established line of work in social psychology and the problem of the patient's and the therapist's expectations. Another paper, by Slechta, Gwynn, and Peoples, draws parallels between psychotherapy and verbal conditioning, and the papers on behavior therapy explicitly rest on more traditional underpinnings. What has been up to now a field of applied research may slowly be joining with its more academic counterpart. Its influence on therapeutic practice—so slight at the moment—may eventually be felt more strongly when it has gathered the weight of all psychology behind it.

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Social History

Medicine in America. Historical Essays. RICHARD HARRISON SHRYOCK. Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1966. 366 pp. $7.50.

Richard Shryock's name has, to more than a generation of historians, been almost synonymous with the history of medicine in America. The present fugitive essays were published originally over a 35-year period—the earliest in 1930, the most recent written especially as an introduction to this volume—and demonstrate quite clearly the nature of Shryock's contribution to the writing of American medical history.

In the 1920's, when Shryock began his work, the great majority of medical history was written by physicians—men trained in the skills and assuming the values of their discipline and in most cases insensitive to the "external" aspects of medical history, to the view that medicine was a social function and not simply a changing conglomerate of great lives and great discoveries. Trained as a historian, Shryock brought a comparatively novel point of view to the study of medicine in America. He sought in his work to make the physician and his ideas part of the accepted canon of historical subject matter—and at the same time to bring to the comparatively insular field of medical history the historian's and sociologist's vision of medicine as a part of the general social process. Though a number of European writers had preceded Shryock in his "social" interpretation of medical history, he and the sociologist Bernhard J. Stern were for a good many years almost alone in attempting to study American problems in such terms. (A warmly gracious appreciation of Shryock and his work by the eminent historian of American culture Merle Curti introduces this volume; he summarizes Shryock's place in American historiography in much greater detail than is possible here.)

Historians of medicine and social historians generally will be grateful to the Johns Hopkins Press for making these scattered essays available in so convenient a form. These articles touch upon such disparate matters as the origins of the public health movement, lay medical ideas, and the status of the profession, and individuals as varied as Sylvester Graham, Benjamin Rush, and William Charles Wells. One might, however, quarrel with the author's decision to write a new introductory essay, a synthesis of the history of medicine in America in 45 pages. It is a bit unwieldy as an introduction, too brief and schematic to aid the common reader in search of a general synthesis of American medicine. (Nor does it succeed in revising and updating the individual essays which follow it.) Inevitably, an essay of this kind becomes an exercise in organization and emphasis, to be appreciated properly only by other professionals.

Despite the breadth and inherent interest of its content, one cannot help finishing this volume with a certain feeling of depression—of discontent, that is, not with the author, but with his disciplinary colleagues who have failed to act upon the cues Shryock has so generously provided. Almost every page in this book, at times consecutive paragraphs, suggest exciting subjects for theses and monographs—as yet unwritten. Thus, for example, Shryock's essay on "American indifference to basic science during the nineteenth century," published almost 20 years ago, is still cited everywhere; but not, as it should be, as a perceptive formulation of a significant and neglected problem, but rather as the *only* systematic discussion of a subject whose scope implies the writing of 19 books rather than 19 pages. Even in the rapidly expanding field of the history of science, the programmatic goal of interpreting science as part of the general social process shows only sporadic signs of fulfillment. And in history proper, the traditional canons of subject and method are still comparatively inflexible; Shryock's 35-year exploration in the new history is still new, novel in its attention to problems still marginal in the concerns of his fellow historians.

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The Ocean Tides

Tides. D. H. MACMILLAN. Elsevier, New York, 1966. 240 pp., illus. $9.50.

The oceanic tides are one of nature's grander phenomena, easily observed without sophisticated instruments, and dramatically changing the shoreline in a complex daily pattern. Explaining the scientific basis for the massive movement of water presents a great challenge to the popularizer, since he is forced to invoke an intricate combination of astronomical and fluid motions.

In *Tides,* D. H. Macmillan, a retired Royal Navy officer and professional hydrographic surveyor, has attempted to provide a nonmathematical introduction to the subject. Any such volume invites comparison with the masterly treatment given the tides in nonmathematical form by Sir George Darwin 70 years ago. The comparison is relatively easy to make in this case, since most of Macmillan's book could also have been written 70 years ago. The subject of tides, like oceanography itself, of which it is an integral part, has entered a period of renewed interest and changed point of view, largely under the impact of computers and advances in electronic instrumentation. Very little of this recent activity is reflected in this book.

There is, however, sufficient challenge in explaining tidal forces and responses to warrant another treatment. Unfortunately, it is impossible to recommend Macmillan's. The book is marred by imprecise, novel, and incorrect use of terminology. Many of the definitions are only partially correct, and some are quite misleading. The introduction of underived and mostly unexplained algebraic formulas is of questionable value, particularly when, as in the case of the formula for seiche period, they are wrong.

The author is at his best in discussing the requirements for harbor works, dredging, and the practical needs of the seaman. This presumably reflects his own experience and primary interest. His experience as a naval officer probably also accounts for the highly personal, patriotic flavor of a discussion of the effects of tides on history. If we take him literally, the rise of British imperialism was probably due to the existence of large tidal ranges in the British Isles.

A book combining Darwin's lucidity with a treatment of tidal motions (including the bodily, internal, and atmospheric tides) in their modern development could be of great value. Macmillan's book is wanting in too many aspects to be of much more than passing interest.

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Fluorine Chemistry

Fluorocarbons and Their Derivatives. R. E. BANKS. Oldbourne, London; Davey, New York, 1966. 167 pp., illus. $6.

Study of the organic chemistry of fluorine has developed rapidly since World War II. During this period the few general texts on fluorine chemistry that have been published have been intended primarily for practicing fluorine chemists. Hence Banks's book, a text for advanced students, is a welcome addition to the list.

The book presents a good summary of the chemistry of fluorocarbons, with