



columns

Dr Allen Hughes

Dr Allen Hughes, originally from England, died in a light aircraft on Tuesday 27 November 2001, at Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. Dr Hughes was leading a team that was intending to visit a rural area for purposes of service provision. All on board the light aircraft died. They were: Dr Hughes, the pilot, the team psychologist and a young woman doctor who had recently been accepted on to the training programme of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. Dr Hughes leaves behind his wife Vanessa, who is pregnant, and his family of origin.

J. D. Thompson

Death announcements

We would like to note the sad deaths of the following Members and Fellows of the College in 2000 and 2001:

Dr Dashper James Arkle
 Professor Alfred Auerback
 Dr David Arthur Bennett
 Dr Isabella Patricia Brown
 Dr Doris Elizabeth Bunbury
 Dr Diana Rosamund Eryl Butler
 Dr Louis Yang Ching
 Sir Gilbert Ridley Debenham
 Professor Nicholas Destounis
 Dr Howard James Llewellyn Dickinson
 Dr Daksha Pravin Emson
 Dr Timothy Laurence Foley
 Professor Arnold Jerome Friedhoff

Dr William Hewitt Gillespie
 Dr Kenneth Dewar Hopkirk
 Dr John Gotea-Loweg
 Dr Keith Edward Jones
 Professor Julian Katz
 Professor Ramesh Kumar
 Dr Charles Symes Lindsay
 Dr Betty Emma Anna Magill
 Dr Robert Kenneth McAll
 Dr Duncan Alexander McRae
 Dr Baiju Ishwarlal Naik
 Dr Mary O'Brien
 Dr Victor Osasikemwen Oviasu
 Dr India Rikh
 Dr Lawrence Sharp
 Dr William Bennett Spry
 Dr Hector John Scott

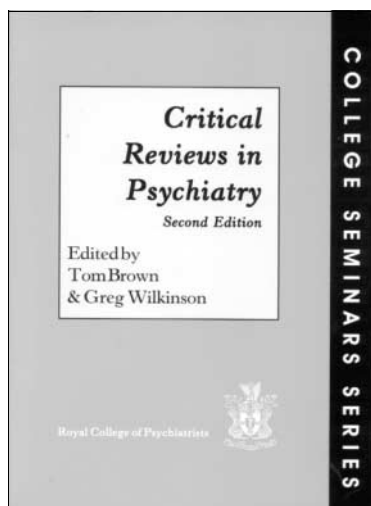
reviews

Understanding Clinical Papers

By David Bowers, Allan House and David Owens.
 Chichester: Wiley. 2001.
 202 pp. £19.95 (pb)
 ISBN: 0-471-48976-X

Critical Reviews in Psychiatry

Edited by Tom Brown and Greg Wilkinson (2nd edn).
 London: Gaskell. 2000.
 278 pp. £18
 ISBN: 1-901242-41-2



With the introduction of the 'critical reading' paper in the MRCPsych examination one might have expected a plethora of texts on the subject. This has not been the case and many anxious trainees scramble to find appropriate texts to help prepare for the examinations. Many of their trainers struggle to assist and despite the suggestions to orientate journal clubs for critical appraisal, many remain insufficient for

the purpose. Will either of these books be of assistance?

Critical Reviews in Psychiatry offers a simple solution: let the trainees practise. The past papers offer them an opportunity to see how others may have struggled and succeeded in previous examinations. The other papers with their set questions and model answers give them an opportunity to practise, an invaluable part of the exam preparation. The model answers might be better placed separately from the questions to reduce temptation to look at the answers when the going gets too difficult. The book could be enhanced by providing an additional section on guided analysis and criticism of the papers, which may deepen understanding.

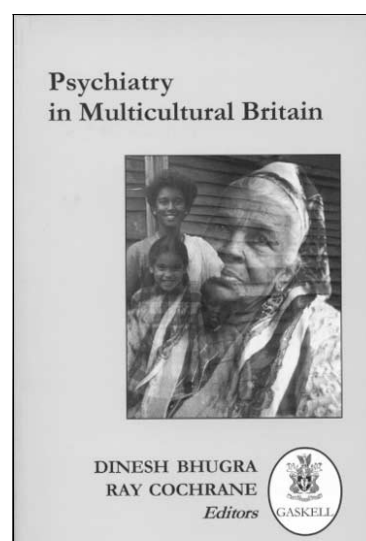
However, is this book sufficient? No, but the addition of *Understanding Clinical Papers* may help. This book, aimed at a general health audience, provides 30 short chapters on a range of topics from reading the introduction of a paper to interpreting graphs and tables, basic designs, numbers and statistics. The book is written in a clear, chatty style and covers many concepts important for understanding research papers that often remain an enigma to trainees (e.g. odds ratios, number needed to treat, confidence intervals, epidemiological fallacy). Its many examples taken from published papers from many areas of clinical medicine are enhanced by the use of text bubbles designed to clearly identify key points the authors wish to make. The book covers some statistical tests not often dealt with in books of such length, for example, logistic and Cox regression and survival analysis. Inevitably in a book of such brevity covering a large area, difficult topics are not covered in any depth and it would have been helpful if the authors had referred to other texts that cover the concepts more thoroughly.

The book does not directly deal with experimental design and method and quasi-experimental design, areas of central importance in understanding much of clinical research, nor does it cover single case designs. One small gripe with the book is that its title, *Understanding Clinical Papers*, is misleading. The book may assist in understanding clinical research papers, but it goes beyond this and provides an understanding of a range of important research-related topics useful to trainees and others.

Jed Boardman Senior Lecturer in Social Psychiatry, Guy's, King's and St Thomas' Medical School, King's College London

Psychiatry in Multicultural Britain

Edited by Dinesh Bhugra and Ray Cochrane. London: Gaskell. 2001.
 367 pp. £30.00 (pb).
 ISBN: 1-901242-45-5





columns

The title of this book is a bold assertion of the fact of multicultural Britain. There are those, of course, for whom multiculturalism or the very idea of a multicultural society is anathema. Multiculturalism as an idea challenges the established order. For example, if we were to embrace the notion of multiculturalism, whose values will come to determine how society will be governed, whose values will hold sway even in domestic matters and whose etiquette and conventions will guide social practice in day-to-day life? There is inherent in celebrating multiculturalism the implicit assumption that all views will be equally valued and accepted. Convergence of values is not the goal of multiculturalism, rather multiculturalism, if it espouses any ideology at all, espouses the idea that all cultures are equally valuable but different. No hierarchy of values exists nor is there a unifying central view of how the good life will be lived. Thus, it is easy to see how some people will have come to perceive multiculturalism as the vanguard of chaos.

The question is how psychiatry in the West, in Britain in particular, will respond to the challenge of multicultural societies. This new book edited by Bhugra and Cochrane is a bold response to the many complex issues that multiculturalism raises. The editors set themselves a high standard indeed. Their aim is to 'bring together the best of contemporary research and scholarship – both pure

and applied – that is relevant to understanding the patterns of mental illness in minority ethnic communities in Britain'. Furthermore they hope to stimulate debate about psychiatry as the now classic works by Rack (1982) and Littlewood and Lipsedge (1982) did 20 years ago. In many respects they succeed in their goal. There are exceptional chapters but also not so good chapters; the variability in the quality of writing is a sign of a multi-authored text.

Littlewood's chapter on psychiatry's culture is as we have come to expect of him: surfeit with erudition, highly theoretical and well argued. His analysis of the terms 'culture' and 'nature' and of the uses and abuses of these terms is illuminating. But in the end, for the practitioner faced with the sharp reality of the clinic, there are few answers or guidance. Bhui's chapter on epidemiology and social issues draws our attention to the complex meanings and limitations of the terms 'race' and 'ethnicity'. He gives an instructive example of Punjabis settled in Britain. Cochrane's chapter on race, prejudice and ethnic identity is an accessible guide to the experience of racial prejudice in Britain or elsewhere. It is particularly good at describing the possible influence of prejudice on self-identity and self-esteem. Bhugra and Cochrane's chapter, Mental illness and ethnic minority groups, gives a comprehensive summary of the epidemiology of

psychiatric disorders in ethnic minorities. The chapters by Shah, Patel and Mirza on old age psychiatry taken together provide one of the best sources of the demography of ageing in minority groups. Nikapota's chapter on child psychiatry provides a wealth of clinical examples to illustrate how cultural practices may influence presentation of child psychiatric problems. It is an intelligent, flexible and humane approach to children and their families. Cope's chapter on forensic psychiatry is well written and full of information about ethnic minorities and the criminal justice system. She identifies the likely explanations for the over-representation of African-Caribbeans in the judicial and secure psychiatric setting.

This book will be of interest to all psychiatrists for its strength is that it focuses on what is most distinctive about psychiatry: the exploration and elucidation of the complexity of human life and psychology. A multicultural society challenges us to understand and tolerate what is peculiar about the other. That is of course the business of psychiatry.

LITTLEWOOD, R. & LIPSEGE, M. (1982) *Aliens and Alienists. Ethnic Minorities and Psychiatry*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

RACK, P. (1982) *Race, Culture, and Mental Disorder*. London: Tavistock.

Professor Femi Oyebode Department of Psychiatry, University of Birmingham

miscellany

Kurt Schneider Scientific Award

This prize for exceptional scientific achievements is sponsored by Janssen-Cilag GmbH Germany, and endowed with €10 000. The prize will be awarded for the ninth time at the 14th Weißenauer

Schizophrenia Symposium in 2003. The aim of the prize is to encourage psychiatric research (clinical psychopathology, biochemistry, physiology, pharmacology, genetics and epidemiology), diagnostics, prevention, therapy and rehabilitation. Usually only one original paper should be submitted (already published or accepted

for publication). Entry papers should be sent to the Board of Trustees no later than 1 September 2002, for the attention of the Chairman, Professor Dr med. Dr h. c. Gerd Huber, Universitäts-Nervenlinik, D-53105, Bonn (Venusberg), Germany (fax: +49 (0) 228 287 5725 or +49 (0) 228 322 883).

forthcoming events

The Royal College of Psychiatrists' Research Unit is organising a 1-day conference titled **Achieving Good Practice in Mental Health Care: From Clinical Governance to the National Plan**. The conference will take place on 17 April 2002 at the Commonwealth Institute, London. For further details please contact Jo Baker (tel: 020 7227 0827; e-mail: joanne1.baker@virgin.net).

Mole conferences would like to announce the following events. **Poppies Instead Of Daddies: The Unresolved Wounds of Childhood War** is a combined theoretical and experimental seminar, which takes place on 18 April

2002 and aims to look at the worldwide web of unresolved world war wounds and to raise awareness of mental health professionals to childhood war trauma. **Whose Evidence is it Anyway?: The Role of Research and the Nature of Evidence from a Service User Perspective** will be held on 24 April 2002 and will examine how the development of user- and survivor-led research can inform and contribute towards evidence-based practice in mental health services. **Asperger's Syndrome, Practical Solutions to Practical Problems** will take place on 29 April 2002.

All events will be held in London and attendance may be used for continuing

professional development (CPD) purposes. For further information please contact Mole Conferences, 26 Church Road, Portslade, Brighton BN41 1LA (tel: 01273 242 634; fax: 01273 235 095; e-mail: info@mole-conferences.com; website and online booking: <http://www.mole-conferences.com>).

The **Critical Psychiatry Network Annual Conference** will be held on 27 April 2002 at the Paragon Hotel, Birmingham. The theme is 'beyond drugs and custody: renewing mental health practice'. Further details can be obtained at <http://www.critpsynet.freeuk.com/Conference2002.htm> or from Strangefish Conferences (tel: 01452 380 326).