Family Systems Therapy: An Integration. By STEPHEN J. SCHULTZ. New York: Jason Aronson. 1984. Pp 512. $30.00.

This book has been developed from the author's lecture course on family systems therapy. His main aim is 'clinical training: Teaching people how to do family systems therapy'. It is therefore principally for clinicians starting to learn this form of treatment. Nevertheless some of the theoretical ideas and practical implications could be interesting to a wider audience.

The introductory section gives a brief account of the historical development of family therapy. The next and largest part of the book is devoted to family systems thinking: general systems theory, an exposition of the main schools of family therapy which have influenced the author, (structural, developmental, strategic and transactioned) and an eclectric integration of these models. Applications of the theories and methods are then discussed at first in general and then by reference to extended transcripts of the treatment of two cases. The chapter on general applications covers the initial interview, treatment, contracts and training. At the end the author comments on current issues being debated by family therapists.

Typography and layout, but above all the authors' style make this text easy to digest. No doubt, some will say that the exposition of the views of other family therapists is over-simplified and selective (e.g. behavioural school only alluded to *en passant*) but, at least, it is clear. This is perhaps less true of the author's own formulations which involve too many assumptions but in general the approach is direct and refreshing. The manner in which the many interview transcripts are annotated is particularly helpful. Reference to research is uncommon but there is not much to refer to. Although the presentation is didactic, it is also modest and includes the demonstration of errors.

Exchange rates make the book costly but it could have value for clinical teaching.

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A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

BROADMOOR ASYLUM

"An interesting and instructive peep into this human menagerie is given in our contemporary the *Hour*. The writer comments on the almost insuperable difficulty with which the medical staff have to struggle when convicts who have been apprenticed to crime are associated with respectable characters who have, from some cause or other, been suddenly attacked with homicidal mania. He also exposes the popular delusion that a great many people confined in Broadmoor Asylum are really sane, but have escaped capital punishment through the mistaken leniency of juries. Such, he confesses, was his own belief till he saw the inmates of the asylum with his own eyes. 'I could not detect,' he says, 'a single countenance in which there was not a trace of mental discord. Some of the patients with whom I and Dr. Orange conversed were thoroughly intelligent on general subjects; but that they were in a state of repression was obvious.' Guided by the superintendent, the writer was introduced to patients manifesting every type of insanity, some of whom had filled high positions in the professions as well as in literature and art. One of them was the American physician who about two years ago shot a young man as he was going to his work at the Lion Brewery, because he fancied he had been in his bedroom and had given him chloroform. He still fancies there are people in his bedroom, and that they come up between the boards and the skirtings, so he covers the floor with newspapers and protects his door with boxes. Another remarkable case was that of a gentleman, also a physician and sometime superintendent of a lunatic asylum, who had killed one of his servant girls. He was engaged in literary composition, incessantly 'beginning again,' on the principle of Penelope with her web, or Sisyphus with his stone. The writer pays a high compliment to Dr. Orange, and effectively supports him in his view that the convict and non-convict classes should be separated".

Reference

Lancet (1873) December 6, p.821.

Researched by Henry R. Rollin, Honorary Librarian, Royal College of Psychiatrists

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