

pertinent questions about them. The impression gained, though, is that regardless of the recognition that mental illness may be present or may play a part in the activities that led to the tragedies represented by these cases, the manner in which the legal process handled these issues did not lead to the authors' impression of a "correct" result.

Winslade presents a solution that appears to be akin to the fashionable "guilty but mentally ill" statutes. He stresses his wish that mentally ill defendants who are found guilty of having committed crimes should be treated (Where? Under whose auspices? For how long?). Finally, on page 210, he even acknowledges "It is not psychiatry or psychiatrists alone who are at the center of this problem. The law permits this and even encourages it," and he goes on to decry the adversary system.

There are many people and organizations in this country who must reason whether the defense is viable. They ought to delve into the matter further than the depth provided by the Winslade book. □

PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS: HAZARDS TO THE BRAIN. By Peter R. Breggin. New York: Spring Publishing Company, 1983, 319 Pp.

Reviewed by Donald A. Swanson, MD

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This is a disturbing book and must be considered as a companion to the author's earlier publication, *Electroshock: Its Brain Disabling Effects*. Once again Dr. Breggin sets out to prove that the prescribing of psychoactive drugs is not therapeutically effective but results in brain damage and mental dysfunction. These effects become, then, the primary and overriding effects of prescribing drugs to treat psychiatric illness.

Dr. Breggin bases his "proof" on his "original" analysis of the literature and on anecdotal reports of dissatisfied patients. After admitting his conclusions may not be shared by most of his colleagues, he attempts to explain this discrepancy in terms of some sort of vague conspiracy by the pharmaceutical industry, which, he insinuates, has misled the psychiatric profession for purely economic reasons.

In actuality, the issue of damaging side effects following exposure to adequately prescribed psychoactive drugs is not as simplistic as Dr. Breggin would have it. Although there is some evidence that persistent subtle deficits, especially tardive dyskinesia, may in fact occur, the vast bulk of both clinical and experimental evidence clearly suggests that the picture of profound, irreversible impairment presented by Dr. Breggin is not a common occurrence.

This book has twelve chapters plus an extensive (albeit idiosyncratic) bibliography. For the most part, it emphasizes the damaging effects of the major tranquilizers, and it briefly mentions the major antidepressants and lithium as other

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harmful agents. The final two chapters deal with ethical issues and carry a detailed discussion by Dr. Breggin of what alternatives to chemotherapy he supports, namely, libertarian humanism and self-determination psychology. □

DRUGS IN PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE. Edited by Peter J. Tyrer. Boston: Butterworths and Co., Ltd., 1982, 442 Pp.

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This excellent book presents in clear, concise language the pharmacology and pharmacokinetics of drugs used in psychiatric practice. It offers no dramatic claims for novelty or erudition, but, according to the editor, it is designed for the clinician, whether he/she be general practitioner, hospital physician, or psychiatrist. For the psychiatrist-in-training, it is especially valuable for the pharmacology and pharmacokinetics of drugs, and for the older clinician, a useful stimulus to review theoretical issues and to reexamine critically his/her clinical practice.

This book contains a range of topics I believe are of concern to the practicing psychiatrist and will be a helpful overview or review. There are sixteen chapters, each written by a clinical scientist with established authority in the subject. The first part of the book describes problems of classification, nomenclature, and evaluation and gives a useful discussion of the essentials of general pharmacokinetics. The bulk of the book then describes each major psychoactive group in terms of their chemistry, pharmacology and toxicology, pharmacokinetics, clinical use, and adverse effects. The chapters on antianxiety drugs and new generation of antidepressants contain excellent clinical information on drugs recently marketed in the United States, and the section on neuroleptic-induced movement disorders usefully reviews a difficult subject. The last part of the book deals with special issues of alcoholism and drug dependence, drugs in child and geriatric psychiatry, and use of drugs in the treatment of eating and sexual disorders.

Most chapters in this book are well written and rich in information, but as with any multiauthored text, there is, inevitably, some overlap and unevenness. The editor has, however, attempted to give a balanced, lucid presentation.

This book consolidates much of what is worth knowing for practicing and training clinicians; it is best used as a reference book rather than for cover-to-cover reading. It should be in every psychiatric library. □