

Books Reviewed

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.

Reviewed by Donald A. Swanson, MD

Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Clinical Director Outpatient Services
Nebraska Psychiatric Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center

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. □