

## Book Reviews

MERCY. By DL Lindsey. New York Bantam Books, 1991. \$5.95 (paperback).

Reviewed by Melvin G. Golzband, MD

Long ago, in the olden days when I began my residency training in psychiatry (yes, I *did* have a good residency in psychiatry, all doubters notwithstanding!), my attitude regarding this particular medical specialty was heavily weighted toward the negative aspects of my ambivalence. I really wanted to be a clinical neurologist. Before beginning medical school classes (yes, I *did* go to medical school, the same doubters notwithstanding!) I was a fellow in research in neurophysiology and neuroanatomy. Neurology then was mainly an academic specialty with little in the way of treatment for any of the then-even-less understood illnesses for which the neurologists were called in to consult. And there weren't very many neurologist-practitioners then just because of that. I knew practically all of them in the Chicago area. To a man (there was not a single woman neurologist there at the time) they counselled me to take a residency in psychiatry because that's what they all had to practice in order to make a living. They were honest enough to recognize that they practiced it poorly, and they warned me against doing it like they did. I am eternally grateful to them.

The Chief of the Psychiatry Service in my residency, a training analyst in the Chicago Institute, was wise enough to give me my head and not force this squarest of pegs into a round hole. He knew my resentment at having to become a dreaded and despised psychiatrist, and he met me more than halfway. He pushed nothing on me at first other than a few books that he recommended as good introductions to what psychiatrists and their patients go through. Some were classics, such as Clifford Beers' *A Mind that Found Itself*, which still has an honored place on my shelf. Do residents these days have any acquaintance with that? He also gave me a few novels, and we discussed the emotional difficulties that those good authors described in their characters. Literary artful seduction worked on me.

When I finally reached the point at which I could have a supervisor of my own and actually began to work with an honest-to-God patient, I was gifted with another remarkable man, a Hungarian refugee whose psychiatric background included analysis with Ferencsi many years before, and who could appeal to me as a lover of good music as well. He, too, led me along the path of discovering that good fiction could be mined for insights into the ways and means of psychiatric illness and its victims. He would speak with me about having learned about many American ways by reading novels, subsequently checking their points of departure against his own knowledge of psychodynamics. My pos-

itive transference by then was bursting its buttons, and to this day I have followed those gratifyingly fortuitous role models in ways that I hope might have pleased them were they to have survived those long years distant.

Books come and go. The publishing business now is not like it used to be, nor are the editors it employs. Many authors of fiction do not even conceive of their work as fundamentally serving the lot of the readers. Instead, they simply write in the hope that TV or the movies will pick up their packages and transform them into viewing pap that will at least guarantee a hefty bundle. On occasion, however, a few books come along that remind me of those days of yore when, by reading novels, I began to learn a little bit about mental illness and the people who suffered from it. When I strike paydirt and find a good one, the joys of discovery mount. Often, I find myself talking them up with colleagues. Most, however, do not bother with them; they say that they have enough to read in the journals. Personally, I find that they usually have more and more to say about newly discovered receptors for dopamine 1, 2, 3, or *ad infinitum*.

Just a couple of months ago, I picked up a terrific book that I recommend unqualifiedly to all forensic psychiatrists. On my way to a meeting, changing planes in the vast DFW airport complex, I had some time and browsed through a bookstore. I needed a good airplane read. I picked up a paperback from the middle of a line of books, all of which seemed to have the same theme of serial

murder. The Gainesville horrors were still fresh in my mind, as were the yet-unsolved serial murders closer to my own San Diego home, and it was only by chance that I picked up this one rather than any on either side of it. Opening it, I found an acknowledgements section following the title page. Prefaces and acknowledgements always provide some clues to a book's worthiness, and this time some flecks of gold in that section caused me to lay out my \$5.95 without hesitation because it seemed that there would be profit in panning for more.

In his acknowledgements, David Lindsey, the author of this book, referred to a number of individuals he described as very helpful in his quest for authenticity. As he wrote, "For their help in educating me about one of the most extraordinary facets of criminal investigation, I want to thank the following men at the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime at the FBI Academy at Quantico, Virginia. . ." and he presented a long list. Well, *I* know that Center, and *I* know some of those men, too. Our own guru of contemporary criminal investigation, Dr. Park Dietz, has worked for years with that Center and those men, and he has brought a number of them into meetings of AAPL and AAFS. Their interaction with us has provided some of our most stimulating, thought-provoking times. Former FBI Special Agent Bob Ressler (now retired), in particular, has been with us so many times that he probably ought to be given one of our little golden apple pins to wear when he attaches his

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AAPL-guest badge to his lapel—which I hope he does for many years to come. When I saw his name in the list of the acknowledgements, I figured that was enough. I began reading the book waiting for the plane and found it hard to put down whenever the events of the meeting I had to attend got in the way.

*Mercy*, used as the very ironic title for a most gruesome book, is the code word used by the passive participants in a sadomasochistic sex ring in an affluent section of Houston, Texas, as described by the author. When the beatings or other assorted tortures, described by Mr. Lindsey with considerable verve and graphic clarity, get to be just too much, the sufferer can call off the perpetrator by using that word—unless, of course, the aggressor turns out to be a serial murderer as happened in this story.

The real problem is that these situations are not just restricted to this story. They really occur in real life. Park Dietz is not only our criminal investigation guru, he is our contemporary Krafft-Ebing as well, and his writings and teachings about the most bizarre sexual directions are reflected in the material presented in this gripping suspense novel. He has educated those of us not involved in sadomasochistic or related sexual practices—that is, most of us, I assume, perhaps naively—about the ways and means of these affairs. He, Bob Ressler, and now David Lindsey have impressed upon me the fact that, although uncommon, these practices are certainly not rare and that, in fact, there are networks of communication between practitioners all over the world so that travellers

can feel at home wherever they go. S & M pornography really reflects what goes on in these chambers. Sure, we say, we know about it, but I doubt that we know about it to the extent described in this book. Moreover, the sadism we recognize as expressed in serial murder is often not considered initially by investigating psychiatrists to be as erotically attached as it actually might be. We can learn a lot from this book.

The plot centers about a series of murders affecting the Houston *demimonde* of S & M. It is, however, a *demimonde* that is affluent and as solidly all-American and apple pie in its other values as any crowd in the ball park or the concert hall. Except for the penchant for giving or taking torture, they are any of us. In fact, one of them *is* us, a psychiatrist, effectively sleazily drawn, who treats a number of the ring-members. It is his character who, in the book, effectively and clearly elaborates many of the psychodynamics of these people and their needs.

Credit the author with not making these explanations seem like pop-psychology or cliches. Also credit him with simply writing a damn good, taut suspense novel apart from its specific scientific interest to us. He has studied his Raymond Chandler well and has absorbed the requisite style without copying it abjectly. The reader will feel the heat and oppression of humid Houston as well as the dread of the tortures. Lindsey has also mastered the mystery writer's trick of seeming to telegraph his punches when he is actually feinting. He has written a great airplane read, but

also a great textbook allowing us to understand more fully the S & M subculture.

There seems to be an epidemic of books currently available about serial murders and murderers. Aside from those on the shelf on either side of *Mercy* in the DFW book stall, another has recently been published which has stimulated considerable discussion. Perhaps part of that is only hype, but if so it is certainly very effective hype because it has taken up considerable media space. I refer to Brent Ellis's, *American Psycho*, which I have not as yet read. Norman Mailer has read it, though, and has discussed it in the pages of *Vanity Fair*, and *Newsweek* has devoted a double-page spread to the book. I read Mailer's article, and I think he praised the book, although frankly it was hard to tell. *Newsweek* definitely did not.

The title, *American Psycho*, may be a tribute to Alfred Hitchcock's film, *Psycho*, with its memorable character of the psychotic Norman Bates and the unforgettable scene of the Janet Leigh character being slain in her shower. The genre is always in debt to Hitchcock, even though his understanding and elaboration of the dynamics of his characters in no way can compare to that of Lindsey. Of course, he did not depend upon the Dietzes and the Ressler to provide him with accurate knowledge.

Apparently, neither did Thomas Harris, whose novel, *The Silence of the Lambs*, has recently been released as a major feature film staffing Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins. When I spoke with Bob Ressler, he waxed enthusiastic

about *Mercy*, indicating that the author's descriptions of the investigative procedures, the roles of the FBI personnel, and their relations with local police were all described in perfectly accurate terms. Moreover, he told me, the author did not sensationalize the S & M rings; that is the way they are, according to Quantico research. In contrast, according to Ressler, Harris's book and the movie made from it is not comparably realistic, although everybody says it's terrific and a great film. I hope I get to see it.

But I did get to read *Mercy* and I count myself fortunate. I commend it to every psychiatrist, forensically oriented or not, because we all need to understand more about the people who engage in sexual practices that we recognize exist but that we may not allow ourselves to understand fully enough because of our own countertransferences. Hooray for David Lindsey.

ADVOCATING FOR THE CHILD  
IN PROTECTION PROCEEDINGS.  
By DN Duquette. Lexington, KY: Lexington Books.

Reviewed by Edwin J. Mikkelsen, MD

In order to evaluate this book one must keep in mind that it is designed for a very specific audience. The authors note that the manuscript is an outgrowth of a fellowship program at the University of Michigan whose purpose is to provide

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additional training in child advocacy to law students. The book is designed to orient attorneys who are involved in child custody and protective cases to the clinical issues raised in these situations. The general areas covered are the historical and social context of child advocacy, the stages of the legal process, and specific sections on physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

As a child psychiatrist, I found many of these sections to be quite superficial. However, as noted above, one has to keep in mind the purpose of the book. Given that many attorneys who become engaged in child-related work will have had no orientation to the field at all, this manuscript makes a valuable contribution. The only danger that I could foresee from this manuscript would be if attorney readers perceived the manuscript as more comprehensive than it is, obviating the need for consultation from child mental health professionals.

The need for a book of this nature also raises the question of how much clinical background and knowledge should be possessed by lawyers involved with child matters. Ideally there would be more specialized fellowships such as that which contributed to the compilation of this book. As fellowship programs of this nature are not widespread, the dissemination of this knowledge to the legal profession will have to come from books like this, as well as seminars provided by legal and psychiatric professional organizations.

PREVENTING ADOLESCENT ABUSE:

EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES. By RP Barth and DS Derezotes. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990. 207 pp. \$26.95.

Reviewed by Sheldon Travin, MD

Although society has become increasingly sensitive to the issue of child abuse, there is a relative lag in its appreciation of the enormous vulnerability to abuse of adolescents. Only recently are we being made aware that adolescents not only can be victimized at the same rate as younger children, but can also themselves victimize others. In both cases, adolescents are unable to deal with abuse on their own; they need to be provided with essential services. Given these emerging realities, there appears to be a great need to develop effective approaches to the prevention of adolescent abuse. The question is, what kinds of preventive measures work?

This is the question Richard P. Barth and David S. Derezotes address in their book *Preventing Adolescent Abuse: Effective Intervention Strategies and Techniques*. The authors begin with a review of the kinds of preventive programs currently existing for child abuse, most of which, as they point out, focus on children rather than adolescents. California's 1984 Child Abuse Prevention and Training Act (CAPTA) has created "the most far-reaching, extensive and ambitious" school-based, visitor-delivered child abuse prevention program in the country. The authors focus on the CAPTA program in their study, which

is designed to describe and evaluate the effectiveness of adolescent abuse prevention programs. The study was made up of three major components: a self-report component including pretest, posttest, and follow-up reports; interviews of students, parents, and professionals; and finally a survey of key informants. Based on the findings of the study, the authors concluded that a far more comprehensive approach to prevention is needed, one that is school-based and community-based as well as located within individual classrooms.

From the beginning, the authors advocate an ecological model for prevention strategies. They note that "a social ecology explanation of abuse," that is, an explanation that stresses the importance of the social environment as an indicator of levels of child abuse, "best explains adolescent abuse." Given this theoretical starting place, and given the relatively unimpressive results that emerged in their study of the effectiveness of classroom-based prevention strategies, the authors' concluding description of a more efficient prevention model is as inarguable as it is unsurprising. Their four major recommendations for the improvement of prevention programs are (1) that attempts to address problems of adolescent abuse should not be made at the expense of younger children, because "the earliest intervention is the best intervention"; (2) that child abuse prevention policy should address *all* forms of child abuse, rather than privileging certain types (i.e., abuse of female children) at the expense of other equally damaging abuse (i.e., of adoles-

cent males); (3) that prevention policies must involve the community and the entire school, rather than be focused on the isolated individual classroom; and (4) that the success of prevention efforts targeting high risk populations may well be possible only if they take place in the context of "universal efforts" in the media, in family life, education, and in the community.

The authors support the design of programs "tailored to high-risk areas and families." If there is a major weakness in this book, it lies in the lack of clear-cut evidence that such "high-risk" areas actually exist. In fact, much of the burgeoning concern about child abuse and sexual abuse over the past decade has been fueled by studies showing that these problems know no boundaries of race, class, or ethnicity—or, for that matter, of "area." Increasingly, there is much to support the belief of many professionals in this field that what these authors describe as "high risk areas and families" may simply loom so large in the statistics because of their more frequent contact with and vulnerability to the public welfare system's intervention.

As an introduction to the topic of adolescent abuse, this work is extremely timely for the general public. It will be of particular interest to readers in the social sciences, especially those involved in public-policy decision-making. Although this is, of course, of interest to forensic psychiatrists, it is of limited value to them because of its emphasis on public policy issues and its lack of interest in issues of clinical relevance. Because these authors are concerned

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with adolescent abuse as a public-policy issue, the psychiatric-legal issues that clinicians working in this field would necessarily be concerned with are not addressed in this work.

TRANCE ON TRIAL. By AW Schefflin and JL Shapiro. New York: Guilford Press, 1989. 338 pp.

Reviewed by Richard S. Epstein, MD

Is clinical hypnosis too imprecise a discipline for it to play a credible role in legal proceedings? Perhaps there is more compatibility between these unlikely bedfellows than one might expect at first glance. After all, by Aaron Burr's definition, the law is "whatever is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained." From an equally sardonic point of view, the same could be applied to clinical hypnosis.

*Trance on Trial* is an up-to-date and scholarly review of the problems and issues arising from the use of hypnosis in the forensic arena. Schefflin and Shapiro describe how a well-meaning clinician might inadvertently "taint" a patient's right to a fair trial in a civil or criminal proceeding if hypnosis was used to overcome a traumatic amnesia, regardless if it was conducted for treatment or forensic purposes. For example, rape victims are often hypnotized in the course of treatment for symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. A *per se* exclusion found in many jurisdictions

would disallow any testimony deriving from recollections that ensued either during the procedure itself or even after its completion. The rape victim might be prevented from testifying in a criminal or civil proceeding against the perpetrator. As a result, the hypnotist could be left exposed to a malpractice suit for failing to warn the patient of the potential legal and financial risks of the therapeutic intervention.

The vagaries of the law in this regard has led to distortions in judicial outcome, as in the case of a hypnotist from Arizona who raped his clients after putting them into trance. That jurisdiction has a *per se* exclusion against testimony arising from hypnosis. Since the victim's testimony was inadmissible, the prosecutor could not bring the accused to trial.

The authors provide an excellent review of clinical hypnosis and memory in a way that will be valuable for all clinicians, whether or not they are trained in the diagnostic or therapeutic use of trance. Useful definitions of hypnosis and a thorough chronological review of the case law regarding the admissibility of its use in the courtroom are interwoven with detailed and interesting clinical examples. As an extra bonus the appendix contains an annotated guide to rulings on the use of forensic hypnosis in various jurisdictions including the 50 states, federal and military court systems, and several foreign countries.

In an effort to assist treating clinicians who find themselves inadvertently drawn into the legal arena, Schefflin and

Shapiro provide a very nice summary of how to approach forensic testimony in general. Their ability to draw upon Milton H. Erickson's work furnishes a thoughtful link between trance-like processes and the dynamics of communication in the courtroom. Although they correctly address the complications that should be expected when a clinician tries to serve in the dual role of a forensic

expert and treating therapist, it would have been more helpful if they had included practical advice about how to keep those two roles separate. Therapists who discover that a patient in treatment is going to require expert testimony, will avoid a lot of consternation if they arrange for another colleague to manage the forensic aspects of the case.