

LEGAL ISSUES IN THE CARE OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS: A GUIDE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL. By Robert L. Sadoff, MD. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1982. 123 pages.

Reviewed by Leonard J. Hertzberg, MD

During the past two decades the busy mental health practitioner has been bombarded with a deluge of legal issues. In this concise publication Dr. Sadoff has successfully addressed a myriad of these issues with clarity and much wisdom in providing practical guidelines for clinical judgment. Dr. Sadoff has noted the mushrooming of forensic texts for psychiatrists and psychologists; however, this book seeks a broader base of clinicians including the clinical social worker, psychiatric nurse, and other mental health practitioners. A comprehensive reading list is provided in the appendix for further pursuit of the topics presented.

There are a total of thirteen chapters within two major sections. The first section relates to the legal regulation of mental health practice; significant issues reviewed include confidentiality, informed consent, involuntary hospitalization, the right to treatment as well as the right to refuse treatment, rights of the mental health practitioner in providing care, and psychiatric emergencies. Additionally, there are extremely valuable chapters on keeping records for mentally ill patients as well as malpractice considerations. The second section includes four chapters relating to areas of general concern to the mental health specialist; issues addressed include aspects of competency determination in psychiatric patients, personal injury, domestic relations, and criminal law.

This book is distinguished not only by Dr. Sadoff's scholarly knowledge of forensic issues and his lucid writing style, but each chapter is filled with sound practical recommendations regarding evaluation and treatment issues. There is little likelihood that mental health legislation will de-escalate in the foreseeable future, but the mental health practitioner will benefit greatly by having incorporated guidelines in this book into this clinical practice.

In summary, this is a book well worth reading. □

THE PSYCHIATRY-LAW DILEMMA: MENTAL HEALTH VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS. By Elio Maggio, MD. Vantage Press, 1981, ISBN 0-533-04795-1, \$13.95.

Reviewed by Frank Eisenberg, MD

The author introduces his work by comparing the problems of psychiatry and law to the difficulties of a patient in treatment. The "situation is reminiscent of that which the mentally disturbed patient, and the schizo-

phrenic more specifically, experiences when he tries to be closer to the therapist, in search of communication and help . . . the so called 'need-fear dilemma.' " Similarly *The Psychiatry-Law Dilemma* presents current questions of social policy—treatment of mental illness, civil commitment, dangerousness, the right to treatment, criminal responsibility, and the insanity defense—in which law and psychiatry must reach an agreement.

The work is really two books, and each could be read as a separate part. The appendix is a 70-page, detailed review (up to 1980) of neurotransmitters, brain mechanics, computer models, and neuropsychopathology. The relationship of the appendix to the five chapters that form the body of the work, is unclear. The first chapter reviews recent history of several significant court cases as they relate to issues of treatment, civil commitment, dangerousness, and responsibility. The second gives a detailed picture of the mental health system in the State of Michigan up to 1977, which the author apparently feels is helpful in giving "a precise idea of the system of mental care in the United States today." Chapter three is called "the Mental Health System and Code on Trial," and it outlines problems resulting from the implementation of legislation and court decisions. The fourth chapter explores the role of the psychiatrist in the court with emphasis on civil cases. Chapter five concludes by stating the author's assessment of the future of psychiatry and law.

This book has several problems. It is not apparent how one chapter relates to any other or to the appendix. The issues presented have been discussed in earlier literature and Dr. Maggio offers so many lengthy quotes from other sources his own ideas remain unclear. He presents a description of various well-recognized conflicts between psychiatry and law but has few suggestions for solutions. In general, the book provides a thorough review of some issues but it is neither current, complete, nor original. □

AGGRESSION IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE (Pergamon General Psychology Series, Vol. 115). Edited by A.P. Goldstein and M.H. Segall. New York: Pergamon Press, 1983. ISBN 0-08-026346-1. viii + 496 pp. \$47.50.

Reviewed by Jorge Veliz, MD
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This book is an excellent and provocative study of aggression from several societies. It provides the beginner or the advanced student with extensive information regarding aggression and how it relates to the nature of the cultures addressed.

The contributors consider Bandura's social learning concept of aggression, but they discuss other theories. "While we find learning more plausi-