

PRESERVATION OF CLIENT RIGHTS. Edited by G.T. Hannah. New York: The Free Press, 1981, xxii + 426 Pp.

Reviewed by Robert C. Marvit, MD
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This book contains a fair amount of material that is useful for mental health professionals. The wide variety of contributors, from different backgrounds, makes this usefulness vary considerably. The whole issue of patients' rights, in this context "client rights," is of increasing concern to all of us. Our concern is shaped pragmatically by "mental health paternalism." Self-determination, autonomy, and paternalism don't get along too well together. The legal and ethical dimensions of clinical practice and clinical judgment are unclear; the resolution of these issues is far from accomplished. Theoretically, personal autonomy and self-determination are principles inherent in all doctor/patient relations. Many sections of this book address those issues and provide some practical solutions.

This reviewer is quite encouraged by the spectrum of issues in many of the chapters. The book contains enough resource information applicable to many situations encountered by community mental health centers, residential treatment facilities, and specialized mental health intervention programs.

Case law and patients' rights are undergoing a variety of evolutionary processes. No text, edited or otherwise, can possibly keep up with the changes. Nevertheless, the principles described and approaches recommended provide a reasonable template for professionals in mental health areas at least to understand (if not implement) some of the ethical and clinical principles involved in the preservation of patients' rights. Notably absent are issues concerning the right to refuse treatment and approaches dealing with specific elements of competency. These issues are addressed in various chapters but not in a cohesive manner.

This generic reference text does an admirable job of covering the spectrum of client rights in various contexts. It is a book that would be well worth having in the libraries of mental health treatment facilities. □

PATIENTS' RIGHTS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE. By James T. Ziegenfuss, PhD, MPH. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, xiii + 233 Pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by Nathan T. Sidley, MD

Patients' rights is a topic that is far easier for health professionals to conceive of in principle than to cope with in practice. Indeed, it is hard for us even to consider the principle, because we tend to perceive the whole area from the standpoint of the provider. This is ironic because we have to be concerned that we might be attacked by the very persons we have devoted ourselves to helping.