

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE JACK-ROLLER AT SEVENTY. By J. Snodgrass. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1982. 173 pp. No price available.

Reviewed by William H. Reid, MD, MPH

This book is a first- and third-person account of the life of the "jack-roller" (a railroad yard mugger) from early adulthood until his death at age 75. It includes extensive comment from prominent sociologists and attempts to integrate this subjective, autobiographical document with more objective observational techniques.

The story of the jack-roller's early life was written by his therapist, Clifford Shaw, and republished during the 1950s. At that time it received considerable sociological attention, under the title, *The Jack-Roller*, in part because of the extraordinary first-person descriptions of a bad kid turned good. This new book by Snodgrass, a sociologist, is an extraordinary "labor of love." It attempts to pick up where the first left off 50 years ago. It describes a man who sees himself as "cured" of his criminal tendencies but who, in reality, continues a mildly (sometimes blatantly) antisocial life-style. Interviews still reveal a larcenous streak, although the jack-roller says he is "relatively unscathed" after his traumatic childhood.

This book provides some hope for those who treat patients with severe antisocial syndromes. It does not quite talk about a "cure" of psychopathy, since the youthful jack-roller might today have been diagnosed as having an adolescent socialization disorder. It does describe, in an effective and poignant way, one man's path through a life which is sometimes inadequate, but which does not revert to the violence and criminality which some might have predicted from his stormy beginnings.

CHARACTER PATHOLOGY: THEORY AND TREATMENT. Edited by M. R. Zales. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1984. 240 pp. \$25.00.

Reviewed by Helen L. Morrison, MD

This volume is a reflection of the proceedings of the 20th Anniversary Meeting of the American College of Psychiatrists. It is the 15th in a series