

## 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

of the annual volumes published by this organization. One of its emphases is what are considered "lower order pathologies" in the personality disorder category: the narcissistic and schizoid characters as well as the borderline personality. In addition, the alcoholic, addictive, delinquent, and criminal personalities are included. The inclusion of these individuals is based on significant defects in ego and superego development.

There are four parts to this volume. The first, *Theories of Character Development*, provides a good review of some very basic concepts as they relate to character disorders, an excellent review of what many have considered to be the "newer" psychoanalytic approaches to the understanding of character disorders (an approach associated with the work of Kohut and his colleagues at the Institute for Psychoanalysis in Chicago), and a discussion of the role of narcissism in normal development. This section may be too brief for some readers who may appreciate a more equalized comparative look at what are frequently considered "opposing" views of the phenomena and treatment of narcissistic and borderline patients.

*Prominent Symptomatic Derivatives* comprise Part 2 of the volume. Character and violence are discussed in the context of history, clinical presentation, and a very brief presentation of the multifaceted aspects of this association. There is an attempt to understand and classify behaviorally disordered youngsters and an unusual and yet well-presented model of alcoholism syndromes based on developmental theory of a self-psychology focus.

The third section involves approaches to treatment of the character-disordered individual. In one chapter, the authors present their techniques of "Short-term Anxiety Provoking Psychotherapy" and demonstrate the use of this approach. The following chapter deals with perceptions of the character problems of the borderline and related disorders. This reviewer does not agree that "the introduction of DSM-III in 1980 has given formal recognition to several diagnostic categories." These diagnoses have always been present in patients. There is a very brief discussion of the complex and troublesome phenomenon of countertransference.

The final section discusses management issues, including a chapter on "Doctors in Trouble" (the impaired physician). In the next chapter, the author provides a very good summary of the work related to the capacity of the psychiatrist to make a reliable prediction of future behavior of an offender/patient. The ethical dilemmas facing the physician as he attempts to provide treatment is a valued part of this chapter. The final chapter provides some levity as well as practicality with its subtitle: "How to Get the Recalcitrant Third Party and the Impossible Patient to Pay Your Bills."

I found this volume a good introduction to the current views of characterologic problems.