

## **Book Reviews**

**POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER: DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT AND LEGAL ISSUES.** By C. B. Scignar. New York: Praeger Press, 1984. 288 pp. \$32.95.

Reviewed by Helen L. Morrison, MD

Scignar prefaces this volume by stating that his personal experience during the past 20 years has led him to write this book. He clarifies that his focus for this volume followed his personal experience of the difficulties in treating patients who were traumatized, utilizing tools learned in "personal analysis and training in psychodynamics." The application of behavioral concepts in the treatment of patients with diagnosis of traumatic neurosis were noted by the author to be "superior to those from treatment methods I formerly employed." He provides a brief historical perspective, including psychoanalytic, physiologic, and behavioral perspectives. Scignar demonstrates the use of questionnaires related to various sources of stress and anxiety reactions. He concludes the "effect of a trauma upon a person's autonomic nervous system determines whether or not a post-traumatic stress disorder develops." Scignar continues and suggests "that a predisposition to a PTSD may result from genetic influence, similar in many respects to predisposition in persons suffering from an anxiety disorder." He explains his techniques in the therapeutic interventions applied to his patient group. These techniques are behavioral in character, with additions of changes in exercise, nutrition, and group treatment. A brief chapter is devoted to legal issues, with presentations describing both defense and plaintiff viewpoints. In addition, a section is related to criminal law. Prevention is briefly addressed. Several case histories are presented. There is a brief foray into the issue of posttraumatic stress disorder in the insanity defense.

**THE FITNESS INTERVIEW TEST: A METHOD FOR EXAMINING FITNESS TO STAND TRIAL.** By R. Roesch, C. D. Webster, and D. Eaves. Toronto: The University of Toronto, 1984. x + 84 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by J. Reid Meloy, PhD

The intent of the fitness interview test (FIT) is to adapt and extend the McGarry Competency Assessment Instrument, developed at the Harvard Laboratory of Community Psychiatry in 1973, for use in Canadian forensic