

another commodity, and the inadequacy of 'a burgeoning host of regulators' lead Kaplan to conclude that 'clincide will continue'.

The real strengths of this book are its easy-to-read, non-technical style, its good references (although there is no index), and the tales of peregrinating mayhem caused by a range of doctors (Kaplan largely sticks to the Anglo-Saxon literature), which are entertaining and well paced. Kaplan also tries to put this process in terms of the history of the development of medical practice over the past 200 years in particular, although his notion that 'until 150 years ago doctors did little more than talk and hold the pulse' is rather condescending to the extraordinary work of Ambrose Paré, William Harvey and William Withering, to name just a few. If there is one clue that emerges from all these strange tales it is that

bad doctors are already being bad, difficult and antisocial in medical school. And they go on being bad by moving around, across specialties, countries and continents, using brazen charm and the power of medicine to stay afloat.

And what about audit? Just 6 months before Shipman's arrest he was reported as a 'single-handed enthusiastic GP with a rolling programme of audit – keep up the good work!'

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CONTENTS

Editorial: Why psychiatry should engage with the media *Claire Bithell*

Case-based discussion

Nick Brown, Gareth Holsgrove & Sadira Teeluckdharry

Management of acute agitation in psychosis: an evidence-based approach in the USA

Justin J. Schleifer

Commentary: Treatment of acute psychotic agitation: gaps in the evidence base

Steve Brown

Teaching medical undergraduates: the psychiatrist as medical teacher

Bennett Eng

Commentary: Undergraduate psychiatry education: the challenges ahead

Neil Masson

EEG in psychiatric practice: to do or not to do?

Vellingiri Raja Badrakalimuthu, Radhika Swamiraju & Hugo de Waal

When things go wrong: a practical guide to dealing with complaints

Richard Hodgson, Santhushi Mendis & Sandra Storey

Working with struggling teams *Guy Undrill & Nathan Gregory*

A balanced approach to race in the treatment of personality disorder

Piyal Sen & Dave Ramaswamy

Body dysmorphic disorder *Jennifer Ross & Simon Gowers*

Peer reviewing made easy *Neel Halder, Rosalind Ramsay, Peter Tyrer & Patricia Casey*

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