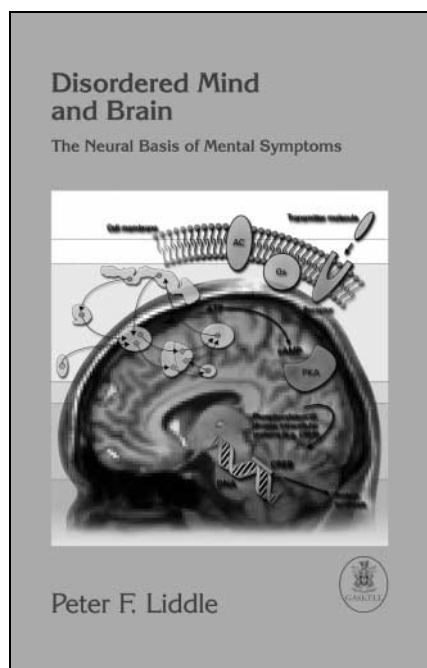


Book reviews

EDITED BY SIDNEY CROWN and ALAN LEE

Disordered Mind and Brain: The Neural Basis of Mental Symptoms

By Peter Liddle. London: Gaskell. 2001. 301 pp. £40.00 (hb). ISBN 1 901242 65 X



The nagging doubt that many of us fostered at the time of the building of the Channel tunnel was would the two teams actually meet in the middle? One is faced with the same uncomfortable reservations when, as a psychopathologist, one starts to read a book on the neural basis of mental symptoms. However, this work is important for all psychiatrists and essential for academics. Congratulations to Gaskell for publishing this significant monograph.

Traditional neurobehavioural knowledge had demonstrated a link between a single neuroanatomical site and a neurophysiological function, for example, Broca's area and speech. Liddle demonstrates how the processes we are really interested in as psychiatrists – thinking, consciousness and judgement – are much more subtle than that and involve many more than one location in the brain, with highly complex interconnections. Can a

single brain site serve two very different functions such as word selection and finger movement? If this can happen, is it the same type of component in each activity that is actually dealt with at that site? Exploring these and similar mysteries is fascinating. Mental activity, thinking, involves the firing of neurons from many sites distributed through the association cortex, basal ganglia and limbic system: such complex processes utilise a network and not a single site.

There are two starting points for this study, and they form the first two parts of the text, with the third part being an integration. So, Part I is on neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, covering the neural substrate of mental activity, the association cortex, the limbic system, cortico-subcortical circuits, and neurotransmission and humoral influences. This section is an excellent course in up-to-date neurosciences and is equally valuable for MRCPsych candidates and senior consultants.

Part II deals with five symptom clusters, considering both neuroscientific and psychological aspects. For each topic, neurosciences includes neuroimaging, neurochemistry and pharmacology, with studies of cerebral activity related to the disordered function. The symptom clusters explored are reality distortion, disorganisation, psychomotor poverty and psychomotor excitation, depression and elation, and anxiety. This is a satisfactory and coherent way of approaching these disordered functions, starting with clinical observation and then adding findings from psychology and neuroscience. Each chapter ends with a synthesis.

Part III integrates the two previous parts by looking at four different mental disorders: schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and psychopathy. This section seeks to be integrative rather than comprehensive and deals usefully with each disease or disorder that it investigates.

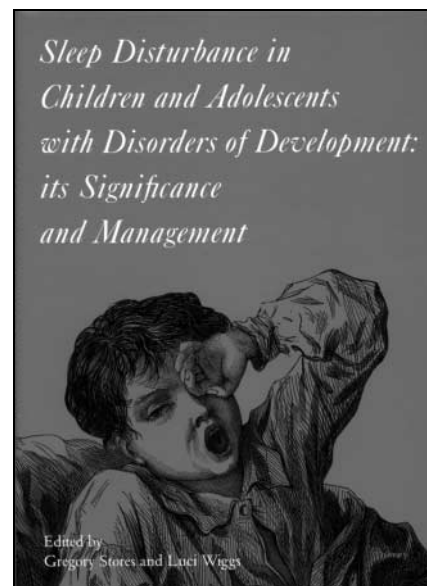
Have the psychopathologists and neuroscientists tunnelling under the Channel met in the middle? Not yet, but

they are now probably digging in the right direction.

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Sleep Disturbance in Children and Adolescents with Disorders of Development: its Significance and Management

Edited by Gregory Stores & Luci Wiggs. London: MacKeith Press. 2001. 221 pp. £40.00 (hb). ISBN 1 898 68324 7



Stores & Wiggs have skilfully crafted this edited text in what hitherto has been a woefully neglected area. Their concern, indeed affection, for their subject is palpable, and the contribution of 15 chapters from invited authors or research groups testifies to the high regard that the clinical academic community internationally has for them. This is the kind of book that practitioners want: quick reference can be made either to symptom or to disorder, and the reader can be assured of reliable material sifted by experts. That there are no fewer than 30 concise chapters in a little over 200 pages is impressive; that none of these is a 'dud' is remarkable.

Each of four central sections follows a similar pattern, illustrated here by the section on neurodevelopmental disorders: chapters on sleep and sleep disturbance in

each of six syndromes (Down's, Prader-Willi, craniofacial, mucopolysaccharidosis, tuberous sclerosis, Rett) are followed by an editorial chapter which summarises sleep-related characteristics of an additional five disorders and provides key references on eight more. The same attention to detail can be found in sections on neurological disorders, non-neurological disorders and psychiatric disorders. My first reaction was that this approach must surely lead to an unhelpful combination of skimming the surface and needless repetition. However, this is not the case. The book opens with a series of chapters from the editors on general issues in assessment and management of sleep, permitting contributions thereafter to focus solely upon specific associations and behavioural phenotypes. The result is a lightly referenced, clinical introduction, in which the editors' experience shines through, complemented by a thoroughly referenced set of chapters that provide both academic and clinical sustenance.

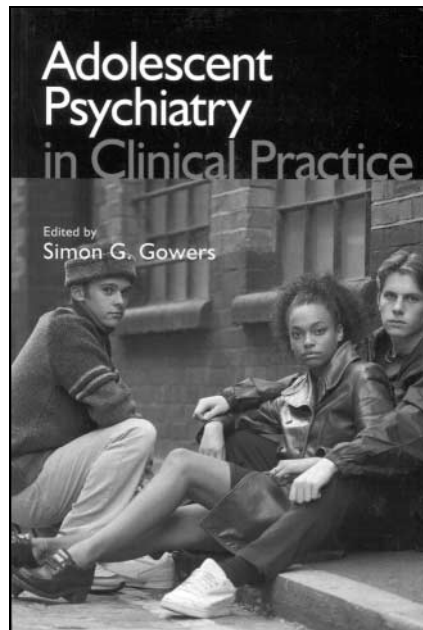
My only criticism is that the book ends rather abruptly. More might have been made of the methodological and research agenda in this important area, although useful pointers are given. However, Stores & Wiggs do set out an educational framework for child health practitioners that provides those responsible for undergraduate and postgraduate curricula with the challenge of the 24-hour care perspective central to the well-being of people with disabilities and those who care for them. This work has all the hallmarks of becoming a standard textbook. It should be widely read and appreciated.

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Adolescent Psychiatry in Clinical Practice

Edited by Simon G. Gowers. London: Arnold. 2001. 560 pp. £45.00 (hb). ISBN 0 340 76384 1

Evidence-based practice is the marriage of individual clinical expertise with the best available scientific evidence. This helpful and up-to-date textbook brings considerable clinical expertise to the available evidence in adolescent psychiatry and



should be useful to practitioners from all disciplines who work with adolescents. Specialist adolescent psychiatry is still relatively undeveloped in the UK, but this book marshals an impressive array of talent among the chapter authors.

The text is divided into four sections: developmental influences, descriptions of disorders, service provision and treatment. However, in attempting to provide breadth of coverage, depth is sometimes sacrificed. For example, only 6 pages are devoted to depression in the affective disorder chapter, 18 pages to descriptions of conduct disorder and delinquency and 12 to psychosis – all major problems in adolescents. Nevertheless, the positives far outweigh the negatives in this book. The opening chapters on development and influences on development are clear and informative. Although brief, the descriptions of disorder convey a real feel for clinical work, and throughout there is a commendable emphasis on placing the adolescent in a developmental and social context. There are good chapters describing assessment and the delivery of services, important given the relative lack of specialist adolescent services around.

Adolescence is a minefield of potential ethical and legal dilemmas for the unwary clinician: for example, Gillick-competent children can consent to treatment without their parents being involved, but their refusal to consent to treatment can be overridden by parents. The chapter devoted to ethical and legal issues takes a problem-solving approach, presenting common

ethical/clinical difficulties and applying basic ethical principles to suggest just solutions. This chapter and the one that follows, on responding to young offenders, also provide a helpful guide to the legislative framework within which adolescent psychiatrists must work. The final section, on treatments, covers the usual ground, but the inclusion of an entire chapter on prevention is welcome.

This is a good, basic textbook. The editor fulfils his ambition of producing a book that is readable, practical and scholarly. The fact that it is produced almost entirely by psychiatrists does not in any way detract from its utility for a wide range of professionals who come into contact with adolescents.

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Borderline Personality Disorder: A Clinical Guide

By John G. Gunderson. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press. 2001. 329 pp. £47.95 (hb). ISBN 1 5862 016 5

This is a masterly contemporary clinical, empirical and theoretical overview of borderline personality disorder (BPD). The author was considerably involved in the

