



review

Critical Reviews in Psychiatry (3rd edn)

Tom Brown
London: Gaskell, 2005, £20 pb,
168 pp. ISBN: 1-904671-15-2

The critical review paper was introduced into the MRCPsych examinations in 1998. The introduction of this paper – to develop the skills to accurately appraise both the scientific and clinical merit of published articles on topics relevant to psychiatry, rather than regurgitating facts from psychiatric textbooks – has revitalised journal clubs throughout the land. The 3rd edition of *Critical Reviews in Psychiatry* follows the first two editions in 1998 and 2000. The longer wait for this new edition may well be related to a change in form, which should make the publication more attractive to readers.

The authors have adopted an ingenious strategy to make the contributory papers

in this volume more appealing to candidates taking the part II MRCPsych examination. All the papers selected have appeared in previous critical review paper examinations. The authors have persuaded the prizewinners that sat the actual papers at the time of the examination, most if not all Laughlin scholars, to answer the questions that were set in the examinations. This is an excellent idea. These superlative former candidates are well versed in the principles of evidence-based medicine, which are now required to do well in this part of the examination and, as their performance illustrates, they are in a position to give very appropriate answers to the questions posed. Having myself been involved in the development of more than one of the critical review papers illustrated in this volume, I can testify to the accuracy of the contributions and expertise of the contributors. A useful section by Stephen Lawrie at the beginning of the book explains the

application of the new terminology of evidence-based medicine and introduces the relevant mathematical concepts in a simple way. A small criticism is the lack of information on the themes of the papers in the list of contents.

The book is likely to be bought by many candidates for the MRCPsych examination and is good value for money. The authors must be congratulated for their resourcefulness in producing a valuable piece of work that probably required more editing than appears on the surface. This book is thoroughly recommended for aspiring candidates taking the MRCPsych part II examination and is a must for educational supervisors who wish to keep abreast of examination developments.

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forthcoming events

Men's Health Forum would like to announce **Mind Your Head – Improving the Mental Wellbeing of Men and Boys**, a ground-breaking conference taking place during National Men's Health Week 2006 on Wednesday, 14 June 2006 at Wembley Conference Centre, London. This conference aims to increase understanding of male mental health issues and the importance of taking gender into account, to raise awareness of the need to develop mental health policy and practice that includes men and boys and to help public sector organisations to prepare for the new duty under the 2006 Equality Act to promote gender equality. For further information please contact Pettifer Conference Services (tel: 01608 674410, e-mail: margaret.pettifer@btopenworld.com).

Perinatal Mental Health 2006: Treatments and Services is a 2-day course hosted by the Southampton and New Forest Perinatal Mental Health Service on 29–30 June 2006. The course will provide an update on clinical research, service and policy developments and good clinical practice in the field of antenatal and postnatal maternal mental health. New topics will include personality disorders, the therapeutic use of mother–

infant videos, the social context of women giving birth in the UK and standards of care for mother and baby in-patient units. National expert speakers include Dr Roch Cantwell, Professor Vivette Glover, Dr Alain Gregoire, Dr Ian Jones, Dr Gwyneth Lewis, Dr Liz McDonald, Dr Margaret Oates, Dr Sue Pawlby and Dr Rachel Bryant Waugh. Registration fees (£240 for 2 days) include coffees, lunches, course materials and VAT. For further information and to ensure you are on their electronic mailing list for this and other perinatal educational events please send your e-mail address to: Sue Wallis, Perinatal Mental Health Service, The Lodge, Tatchbury Mount, Calmore, Southampton SO40 2RZ (tel: 023 8087 4348, fax: 023 8087 4360, e-mail: sue.wallis@wht.nhs.uk).

Sexual Medicine and Psychotherapy. Porterbrook Clinic is pleased to offer part-time training courses in sexual medicine and psychosexual therapy designed especially for medical, healthcare professionals and specialists. The courses provide an opportunity to acquire specialist experience and qualifications in sexual and relationship assessment, treatment and referral skills, as well as a platform for further specialist study and career

progression through continuing professional development. Porterbrook Clinic is a member of the NHS Sheffield Care Trust and provides clinical, training and research services, working in partnership with National and European health service providers. Further information and application forms are available from: Course Secretary, Porterbrook Clinic, Osborne Road, Sheffield, S11 9BF (tel: 0114 271 6671, fax: 0114 271 8693, e-mail: mail@porterbrookclinic.org.uk or ruth.hallamjones@sct.nhs.uk).

The Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF), the Indian Psychiatric Society and the World Psychiatric Association would like to announce the **International Conference on Schizophrenia 2006** to be held in Chennai, India on 13–15 October 2006. The theme of the conference is 'Blending schizophrenia care with research: global perspectives'. This conference will showcase the best of schizophrenia research around the world and will cover a wide range of topics which have an impact on care, rehabilitation and policies and programmes for those with mental illness and disability. For further information please visit <http://www.icons-scarf.org>