

burnout. However, male physicians were 3 times more likely to be in the higher claims group for malpractice. This might suggest that female physicians interact more effectively with their patients but at greater emotional cost, which is likely to be of increasing significance with the feminisation of the workforce.

The morbidity rates in the profession quoted in the book are alarming: 'On average death by suicide is about 70% more likely among male physicians in the United States than among other professionals and 250–400% higher among female physicians'. On a less sombre note is the interesting finding from a study that investigated couple relationships, which found that physicians who sought marital counselling on average talked to their spouses 30.5 minutes per day whereas those who neither considered nor sought marital counselling averaged 57.3 minutes per day, a novel way perhaps of ascertaining the possible health of a relationship. This possibly reflects some of the challenges and difficulties in being able to achieve a work/life balance.

*The Physician as Patient* is a very good and helpful book and I recommend it to anybody who is involved in treating physicians, is interested in physicians' health or to educators responsible for preparing future generations of doctors to cope with the challenges of their life as members of the medical profession.

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**Legislation on Coercive Mental Health Care in Europe: Legal Documents and Comparative Assessment of Twelve European Countries**

Edited by Thomas W. Kallert & Francisco Torres-Gonzales.  
Peter Lang, 2006. 408pp.  
£44.80 (hb).  
ISBN 9783631554463

The government's tortuous attempts to reform the Mental Health Act in England and Wales, and the recent introduction of new legislation in Scotland, has meant that mental health legislation has been hotly debated in recent years, at least in the UK. This book, with its unashamedly European perspective, adds a different dimension to that debate. It describes a study, funded by the European Union, that compares mental health legislation in 12 of the member states, in an era that has seen the introduction of community care and more specialised treatments, but also increasing rates of compulsory admissions.

Most of the book is devoted to individual chapters describing the legislation in the different states, written by many different authors whose first language is not English. There are some extensive quotes from legal judgments which can be a little hard-going. Nevertheless, the chapters provide a useful introduction for the travelling clinician. It was interesting to read that

as a consequence of devolved powers, the 16 different *Länder* in Germany all have their own mental health law – we can be grateful, perhaps, that we only have three in the UK.

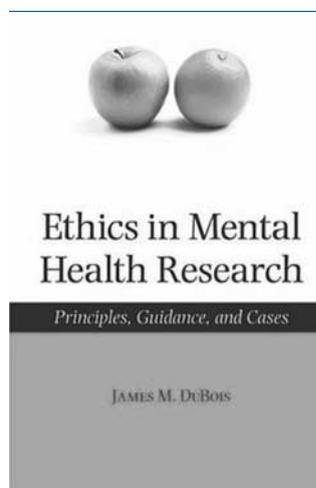
Many psychiatrists have been concerned about the British government's proposals to extend compulsory powers to detain more people with mental health problems in England and Wales. Many have advocated for various exclusions in the definition of mental disorder, including one for political and cultural beliefs. In the former German Democratic Republic, we learn that during 'high-ranking international political events', the political authorities would 'advise' hospitals to admit people who might behave in a socially disturbing way, or restrict the freedom of those already admitted.

The final two chapters are of more general interest, making comparisons between the legislatures. They note a paradigm shift where, although public safety remains an important issue, there is increasing concern for the safe and adequate treatment of people with mental illness. Most countries require a court to authorise detention, and it is perhaps unfortunate that proposals for tribunals to authorise detention of patients in England and Wales within the first few weeks of their admission were dropped by the UK government.

I would have welcomed an index and, more importantly, some discussion about the differential impact of mental health legislation in different cultural groups. In spite of this, the international psychiatrist will find this a useful companion.

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**Ethics in Mental Health Research: Principles, Guidance and Cases**

By James M. DuBois.  
Oxford University Press, 2008.  
£23.99 (hb). 256pp.  
ISBN 9780195179934

This is an excellent book, useful for anyone who is interested in research ethics or would like to learn more about how to do research in an ethical way. Much of the material can be generalised to all clinical research, as well as being useful to those interested specifically in mental health research. The book is, however, based upon, and refers almost exclusively to, regulatory procedures, guidance and practice in the US.

The first three chapters describe and justify DuBois' approach and the remaining seven explore central issues, amply illustrated with case studies centred on mental health. The first part should be read in its entirety before dipping into the second part, if the book can't be read from cover to cover.