

the R.M.P.A. questionnaire on post-graduate experience and training of Consultant Psychiatrists (*Journal*, February 1969 pp. 225-31), is the time not opportune to question the significance of present-day psychiatry as the major background discipline in this field? Clearly the D.P.M., as at present constituted, has little relevance, and the paucity of applicants for specialist's posts is understandable.

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#### OBSESSIONALITY AND SELF-APPRAISAL QUESTIONNAIRES

DEAR SIR,

Dr. Reed (*Journal*, February 1969, p. 205), takes me to task, as did Kline (1967), for not distinguishing between traits and symptoms (Orme 1965). I must agree that I called 'traits' what Sandler and Hazari (1960) called 'symptoms'. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and I did not see that I was under any obligation to use a terminology that was speculative and unverified. As Reed points out, Kline's study of normals could not really produce any information about obsessional neurosis. But Reed's study of more appropriate groups leads inevitably to a conclusion similar to mine, and it would be justifiable to enlarge Reed's transposition to 'the admission of obsessional symptoms *and traits* is intimately related to general emotional instability.'

How this finding is interpreted remains sheer speculation and, I must plead, should be kept quite separate. I do agree with Reed's comment on the 'quality of experience', and have pointed out elsewhere (Orme 1968) that the basic problem of measuring the intensity (or per cent time) of traits and symptoms is ignored in standard inventory usage. It is my own personal speculation that this is a major reason why personality inventories, despite impressive theoretical and factorial clarion calls, still have remarkable difficulty in distinguishing between diagnostic categories. That, after all, is what they are supposed to do.

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#### REFERENCES

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- ORME, J. E. (1965). 'The relationship of obsessional traits to general emotional instability.' *Brit. J. med. Psychol.*, **38**, 269-371.
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#### STENDEL PRIZE

DEAR SIR,

I would like to draw the attention of your readers to the first award of the Stengel Prize due to be made in July 1970. This prize was established from contributions by Professor Stengel's colleagues to mark his retirement from the Chair of Psychiatry at the University of Sheffield.

The prize of £120 is to be awarded every three years to any doctor or group of doctors who have worked in the Sheffield Region (i.e. geographical area covered by the Regional Hospital Board) for a piece of research in a field related to clinical psychiatry and carried out during tenure of an appointment in the Sheffield Region, whether in hospital, University, general practice or local authority service. Preferences will be given to doctors who have been qualified for not more than eight years. The prize may be shared at the discretion of the assessors.

The entry should consist of two typed copies of the study written in a manner suitable for publication in a scientific journal. The closing date will be 31st March 1970. Any inquiries concerning the suitability of a project or eligibility of a candidate should be made to the Board of Assessors.

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