

Oedipus the King strikes a prescient chord as reflected in the ensuing years since I was part of that audience. The strength of Oedipus and our humanity lies in the fact that he had ultimate responsibility for his actions. This is a theme that transcends cultural frontiers and linguistic barriers. In his adaptation of Oedipus Rex, the Nigerian playwright Ola Rotimi wrote the play, aptly titled *The Gods are not to Blame*, creating his archetypes within a cultural and metaphysical framework and reflecting human conflicts according to accepted moral criteria.

The Achilles' tendon of the classic drama is the fact that it cannot exist without an audience. It is the symbolism which speaks directly to the inner world of the audience that establishes it as an archetypal classic. This is by no means a pyrrhic quality.

The seer suggests that Oedipus himself is the cause of his city's problem; Oedipus is furious with denial at first, *blind* to his own identity. In confronting the secret of who he is, he persists with self-examination, similar to the process of psychoanalysis. As psychological insight dawns, he now sees who he is, with ensuing guilt. In what could be seen as poignantly symbolic, he plucks out his eyes and is then led away to exile. In psychotherapy, it is usually a difficult task breaking through the defences that protect against hidden feelings, impulses, conflict or pain and it is only rewarding if insight is translated into positive action. This remains the lesson of the classic Greek tragedy.

R. A. ADENIRAN
Academic Sub-department of Psychological
Medicine, North Wales Hospital, Denbigh,
Clwyd LL16 5SS

Lottomania

Sir: Harry Doyle suggests (*Psychiatric Bulletin*, 1995, 19, 382) the term 'Lottomania' in a case regarding the incorporation of the National Lottery into a delusional belief system.

I would like to describe a similar case within the psychogeriatric population who was seen only a few weeks following the institution of the Lottery. A 75-year-old married woman presented with a three week history of a hypomanic illness. She had a history of one episode of psychotic depression three years previously, successfully treated with ECT. As well as grandiose religious delusions, overactivity and a disturbed sleep pattern, she believed she had won £1000 on the National Lottery (she had not in fact purchased a ticket). She believed the visiting doctors were members of the press and that her picture would appear the following morning in the national newspapers.

She was admitted under Section 2 of the Mental Health Act 1983 and quickly settled with neuroleptic medication and lithium. She has been well throughout follow-up and has still never purchased a ticket for the Lottery.

It seems likely that these grandiose presentations will be seen quite commonly. However, recent media coverage suggests the National Lottery may be incorporated into a wider spectrum of psychopathology.

MARK EARTHROWL
Moorgreen Hospital,
Botley Road,
Southampton SO30 3JB