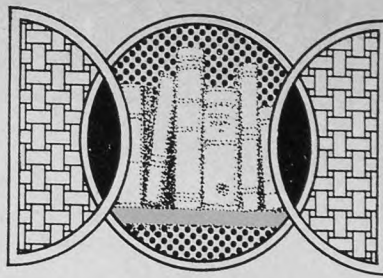


# Book Reviews



**Learning Difficulties; Causes and Psychological Implications — A Guide for Professionals.** Kurt Glaser and Susanne Glaser. Charles C Thomas Publishers, Springfield, Illinois, 1974, 86 pp., \$8.75.

This is an excellent overview of the subject of learning difficulties and, as stated in the preface and introduction, is designed for all professionals who are involved with children, including physicians, school nurses, teachers, and social workers. It is also suitable for educated parents who may have a child with learning problems.

The authors have succeeded admirably in their objective. The narrative is concise, easy to read and understand, and many illustrative case histories are included with presenting problems and their resolutions. There are no pictures, figures, or tables. There are two diagrams included in Chapter 1.

This is a book that anyone can read from cover to cover in a short time. It is not meant to be a reference text. For those wishing to obtain more in-depth information, a very complete five-page bibliography is included. I believe that family physicians, as well as other health team professionals, will find this work a useful addition to their library. The material is well organized and indexed.

As a family physician who has served as a medical consultant for a program in special education for brain-damaged children, I have been struck by the lack of even basic understanding of learning problems by many pediatricians and family physicians in the community. I believe that if such physicians were to acquire this book and read it carefully, they would have a firm base on which to build their knowledge and understanding of the subject. It is equally suitable for all health professionals and students.

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**Handbook of Community Health (2nd Edition).** Murray Grant. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, 1975, 290 pp., \$7.50.

In the preface, the author takes great pains to state his objective which is to present the basics of the subject "in a rudimentary, rather than a comprehensive manner." This he has done admirably. On each page, the information is presented in a manner that is terse but sufficiently broad to make it unnecessary for the reader to consult other references unless he wants to explore a particular problem in very great depth. Material is presented in a factual, low-key style which is refreshing in this day of verbiage in scientific literature. Every student, from the tyro to the sophisticate, would do well to peruse this little volume in order to obtain an overview of the field of community health.

Thomas M. Hart, MD  
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**Drugs and Behavior.** F. Leavitt. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1974, 404 pp., \$7.95.

This is a paperback textbook for a graduate course in psychopharmacology; it could also serve as supplemental reading for related courses such as physiological psychiatry or pharmacy. No knowledge of pharmacology is assumed, and the first three chapters outline the principles of pharmacology. Succeeding chapters are devoted to psychopharmaceutical drugs, both legal and illegal, sensory phenomena, learning and memory phenomena, and effects on creativity, sex, aggression, sleep, and dreams. The final chapter describes electrical stimulation of the brain. A few relevant illustrations are included, apparently intended to stimulate the interest of graduate students. The author meets his objectives well.

Literature references at the end of each chapter are generally to journals of experimental psychology, physiology, and pharmacology. Clinical and therapeutic discussions are minimal. The only likely relevance of the content to family practice would be for supplemental reading by patients with college backgrounds who wished to know about recent psychopharmacy findings in order to deal with personal or family problems related to experimentation with psychoactive drugs. Presumably, physician extenders will find it useful as background information. Courses related to drug abuse at the family practice residency level would not find the text of benefit because the residents would have covered the material in undergraduate or medical school with greater clinical application.

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**The Child with Abdominal Pains (2nd Edition).** John Apley. J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1975, 117 pp., \$9.75.

This is a delightful, readable, and understandable small book written by an English clinician in the usual charming English style.

Dr. Apley begins his third chapter with the statement, "The family doctor, it has been neatly said: 'is a naturalist pursuing his quarry and studying its habits in the jungle; the specialist only the specimens in the zoo.' The proper study for every doctor is not merely a symptom, organ, region, or disease, but the whole patient in the background of the family and the environment. Pain is an experience in which the whole patient takes part."

It is with this underlying philosophy that the problem of abdominal pain in children is investigated scientifically and thoroughly in 1,000 school-children, approximately 500 of whom were seen in a hospital setting and 500 of whom were seen in outpatient clinics.

For those of us who have struggled with the unsatisfactory organic answers to abdominal pain in children, the book will provide reassurance and a source of encouragement. Dr. Apley discusses his methods of inquiry, the role of the family, types of abdominal

pain, methods of investigation of organic causes, and the paucity of findings of organic nature. He also has investigated the intelligence and emotional status of children with abdominal pain. There is a chapter on the treatment of abdominal pain in cases where there is no discernible organic etiology. The book presents a workable diagnostic method in the approach to the child with abdominal pain and reassurance to the physician when no organic cause is located.

For those physicians who treat children, this small book would seem to be almost mandatory reading, for on it one could base a lifetime approach to this very perplexing problem seen every day in general practice.

*Frank W. Norman, MD  
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#### **Bed Wetting: Origins and Treatment.**

*Warren R. Baller. Pergamon Press, New York, 1975, 124 pp., hardcover: \$10.50, paperback: \$5.75.*

Available in both hardcover and paperback, this excellent work belongs in the library of every physician or counselor who deals with children and their problems. Nocturnal enuresis is a common condition, and Dr. Baller's book would appear extremely helpful. Clear and concise, the text moves smoothly from a discussion of the associated factors and etiological theories, to reviews, first of the frequency and age distribution of the problem, and then of the various methods of treatment and their results. The author has found the various conditioning methods most helpful and describes their application and results in some detail, reviewing his own experience and the literature.

This book is highly recommended for practicing family physicians and family practice residents, and those allied health professionals who counsel children and their parents. Regardless of one's therapeutic approach to the problem of bed wetting, the information and statistics will prove invaluable in dealing with the patient and his family in efforts to relieve the conflict, guilt, and diminished self-image which result from enuresis.

*George H. Hess, MD  
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#### **Emergency Psychiatric Care — The Management of Mental Health Crises.**

*Edited by H. L. P. Resnik and Harvey L. Ruben. Charles Press Publishers, Inc., Bowie, Maryland, 1975, 175 pp., \$8.95.*

It is my own belief that just about every patient in an Emergency Room is a psychiatric patient in a mental health crisis. Yet, too often the exigencies of practice in the high-tension surroundings of an Emergency Room result in insensitive or callous behavior on the part of experienced personnel in whom familiarity has bred contempt, or whose own defenses require a tough indifference to the emotional turmoils of their patients.

Resnik's book is especially recommended to nursing or medical students, but also to all others who wonder how they will cope with the problems which they will certainly encounter when they begin to work in emergency services. No one can argue with the editors that "it is a rare person whose clinical skills with emotional crises are not improved by the suggestions of our colleagues."

This lucid and pragmatic manual, almost free of psychiatric jargon, should in fact be read by every person who works in an Emergency Room — from the registrar clerk through each member of the nursing, medical, and volunteer staffs.

*Bernadine Z. Paulshock, MD  
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#### **Triage: Problem Oriented Sorting of Patients.**

*Donald M. Vickery. Robert J. Brady Company, Bowie, Maryland, 1975, 124 pp., \$8.95.*

This volume is a well-organized synopsis of suggestions for health workers who have initial contact with emergency patients. It would be most helpful in an Emergency Room setting or in a large group practice where there is a heavy concentration of emergency patients. It is oriented towards the untrained triage worker who must make the initial decision for each patient. The disposition of the patient is either to a physician's office or to the immediate care of a physician's assistant. A third alternative is giving the patient a later appointment.

This book would be relevant for

those physicians in family practice who are working in settings where physician's assistants or Emergency Room personnel are being trained. Anyone associated with a family practice residency program would benefit from reviewing this book and making a copy available for those health workers who have first patient contact. The format is appropriate. It is based on the problem-oriented record and is simply worded and well outlined. Very helpful flow sheets for each problem a patient may present are included.

*Robert M. Zweig, MD  
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**Fundamentals of Family Practice.** *Wilfred Snodgrass. F. A. Davis Company, Philadelphia, 1975, 634 pp., \$35.00.*

Slowly but surely the specialty of family practice is developing its own literature as well as scope of practice.

*Fundamentals of Family Practice* makes a major contribution to this early accumulation of textbooks, journals, and philosophical and scientific papers. As stated by the author, the book is not intended to replace every other textbook in medicine and surgery. Rather, it stresses areas of medicine and techniques especially applicable to family practice. *Fundamentals* may be used as a textbook supplementing other, more detailed volumes relating to various other specialties or it will, perhaps, find its way to a convenient place on the physician's desk where he may use it as a quick reference in day-to-day practice.

The book contains a wealth of practical information for everyday family practice. From "Obstetrics" through "Child Growth and Development," "Family Practice Psychiatry," "Surgical Principles and Emergencies," "Fractures," "Physical Therapy," to "Neurology," there are chapters which deal specifically with hundreds of frequently encountered problems. *Fundamentals of Family Practice* is well written and easy to read and understand. Illustrations are numerous and adequate. Family practice residents as well as practicing clinicians will find this book quite useful.

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