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**Eclectic Psychiatry:
Dynamics of Psychotherapy
by Percival M. Symonds**

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Very interesting is the authors' evaluation of the type of milieu therapy practiced at the New York Wiltwyck School for Boys which rests upon an action of "permissiveness and unconditional love" (p. 124). At Wiltwyck the psychopathic children were studied in comparison with other kinds of juvenile delinquents. To tap different traits of psychopathic personality the McCords have devised original testing instruments with which they have conducted their investigations and experiments. Positive data obtained by the use of such tests and by direct observation prove that children diagnosed as psychopathic respond to the Wiltwyck therapy better than neurotic or psychotic children. This book proves that psychopathy, if treated properly and early enough can be cured.

In their last chapter the authors ask whether psychopaths may be held legally responsible for their acts. This discussion remains inconclusive but sheds much light on the moral disturbance and responsibility of this group of disturbed individuals. Not only the jurist but the educator and the moral theologian will find this chapter of great interest.

The McCords have written an excellent volume. In my opinion this is the most objective and comprehensive book available in the field of psychopathy. Since the problems of psychopathy is present here in the Philippines as well as in the United States, I hope this book will come to the hands of our criminologists, psychologists and educators.

FRANCESCO PARISI

ECLECTIC PSYCHIATRY

DYNAMICS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY. By Percival M. Symonds. Grune and Stratton. New York and London. 1956. Pp. ix, 211.

IN this volume, the first of a set of three on *Dynamics of Psychotherapy*, the approach is essentially eclectic. The author avoids subscribing to any school or theory, but selecting some objective procedures of classics like Freud, Adler, Jung, Ferenczi, Stekel and Rank, he coordinates them with contemporary contributions from

Alexander, Rogers, Sullivan, Fromm, Thompson and Horney. Led by his own personal experience as a therapist and as a professor, he organizes the collected data in a coherent course of practical advice for psychotherapeutic procedure.

The approach, being eclectic, remains necessarily empirical. It cannot be considered therefore as a treatise on psychotherapy because psychotherapy, as every other science, must be based on definite laws and principles. The book, however, is a helpful manual in the hands of those who already possess the synthetic knowledge of the nature and origin of the disturbance for which psychotherapy is a proper treatment. It is not legitimate to undertake psychotherapy without the objective knowledge of the essential needs and developmental phases of the normal individual personality and without an adequate insight into the deviations from normalcy which produce psychic abnormality. Therefore an eclectic approach to psychotherapy must remain inadequate.

Psychotherapy according to the author intends only to remove from the mind of the person those disturbances because of which the individual cannot act freely and satisfactorily. For the author, therefore, the function of psychotherapy has to be distinguished from the functions of education and counseling, the latter two being necessarily connected with certain cultural patterns and a definite philosophy of life. Psychotherapy, therefore, can remain free from wider theoretical assumptions and can fit into practically any psychological theory. Although we do not deny that the immediate purpose of psychotherapy is limited to the removal of psychic disturbances, yet we cannot disconnect psychotherapy from the adjustment that man has to make to reality according to the basic exigencies of human nature. Therefore, psychotherapeutic procedures remain functionally subordinated to the general and natural dynamism of man. It is possible to remove the obstacle of a psychic disturbance by destroying deeper elements of general adjustment. Thus, for example, it would be easy to eliminate an anxiety condition by the obliteration of a naturally acquired moral principle. For this reason we disagree with the author in establishing the principle that psychotherapy remains limited in its own immediate finality. We contend that principles of practical psychotherapy cannot stand alone but must be subordinated to principles of general adjustment to reality.

Not denying the value of the book and its usefulness in the hands of a psychologist who knows already the various aspects of personality development and adjustment to reality, we do not think that the book can be given as a manual of instruction and information to individuals who want to undertake psychotherapy. A psychotherapist formed on such a course will know how to approach his client, how to avoid losing contact with him, but will not know clearly where to direct the finality of his psychotherapeutic influence.

Although the author says that he does not belong to any school and at least in this work does not present any philosophy of life, he actually materializes a definite philosophy: the belief that the main principle in psychology is to avoid universal principles. This is the weakness of all eclectic approaches for only a true synthesis reaches the first principle from which all other principles follow as factual and logical consequences. Due to his eclecticism, Symonds remains quite vague in his definitions and inclines to define by description which, although objective, remains inadequate. The inadequacy of definitions naturally interferes with the security of the scientific approach. Psychotherapy in this book is not yet a science, but remains an art which has its own techniques but which depends mainly on the acquired skills and natural gifts of the psychotherapist. In our opinion, although the practice of psychotherapy will be more or less successful depending on the individual qualities of the therapist, still psychotherapy as a science should stay by itself independent from accidental elements inherent not to the science but to the scientist.

FRANCESCO PARISI

CYTOLOGIC TECHNICS

CYTOLOGIC TECHNICS FOR OFFICE AND CLINIC. By H. E. Nieburg M.D. Grune and Stratton Inc. New York. 1956. Pp. Pp. viii, 233. \$7.75

AUTHORED by Dr. Nieburg, Director of the Cytology Laboratory of Beth El Hospital and consultant and lecturer of the Cancer Division of the Department of Health, New York City, this book