

References

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S. R. Rochester, Ph.D.
Clarke Institute of Psychiatry
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

LAFFAL, JULIUS. *The Source Document in Schizophrenia*. Gallery Press, Hope Valley, R. I., 1979. 377 pp. \$10.95.

In almost every respect, from its subtitle ("Whoever Had Most Fish Would Be Lord and Master") to its appendices of concepts and correlation tables, this is an unusual—one might even say a unique—book. According to the author, the major purpose of the book is "to present verbatim interviews with a psychiatric patient diagnosed schizophrenic" (p. 11). In keeping with his stated purpose, Laffal devotes 270 of the book's 377 pages to transcripts of 30 interviews he had with a schizophrenic male adult over a period of 16 months. The patient was hospitalized during the period that the interviews took place (sometimes on a locked ward) and was treated with tranquilizers as well as psychotherapy. Although Laffal does not suggest that this patient is somehow representative of schizophrenics in general, it is clearly intended (as in his book's title) that the transcripts provide a source of data for those interested in studying schizophrenic language. There is no doubt that Laffal's book succeeds in its main purpose. In fact, given the traditional importance of single case studies in the history of psychiatry and psychology, Laffal has done a great service to researchers and clinicians alike by supplying what must be the longest verbatim record of schizophrenic speech yet published.

The remaining 100 or so pages of this book are devoted to a general discussion of schizophrenic language, a conceptual analysis of the interviews, and several appendices. Laffal, of course, has written on the topic of schizophrenic language before, and the very brief discussion provided in this book may not be a definitive statement of his views. As I understand his initial discussion, Laffal seems to believe (along with many researchers) that "semantic structure is intact in schizophrenic individuals" (p. 33). If this is

the case, however, it is a bit puzzling that, in the final section of his book, Laffal devotes so much time and effort to an essentially semantic analysis of his patient's speech. Laffal apparently believes that, if one can make sense of schizophrenic speech, then one has demonstrated that schizophrenics have language "competence" and "the wherewithal to participate in normal communicative exchange" (p. 33). He even suggests that, given the proper, nondistracting conditions, schizophrenics may be amenable to "psychological and social treatments which rely upon language" (p. 33). Whatever one thinks about the efficacy of psychotherapy for schizophrenia, it should be apparent that Laffal's conclusions are unwarranted. The ability to communicate is at least as much dependent on control processes as it is on the contents or organization of the semantic store. What use, for example, would a library be if someone tossed out the card catalogue and couldn't access the books? Although Laffal seems to be able to uncover the thematic content of confusing schizophrenic speech, he has not clarified why the speech is so confusing in the first place. Discovering precisely what has gone wrong in schizophrenia remains a great unfinished task. This book may provide the raw materials to help some of us further along toward completing it.

Steven Schwartz, Ph.D.
University of Western Australia
Perth, Western Australia

KARLSSON, JON L. *Inheritance of Creative Intelligence*. Nelson-Hall, Chicago, 1978. xi + 206 pp. Paperback. \$7.95.

This is a fascinating little book, one which introduces the reader to genetic information and speculation not generally found in texts on human genetics or in the conventional literature of behavioral genetics. As one reader who is well versed in the research literature on the genetics of human mental abilities, I found a good deal that is new and provocative in Karlsson's work. If it is not all established science, it is at least important food for thought and further scientific verification.

Karlsson's central thesis is based on the broad genetic principle that seemingly disadvantageous physical or behavioral anomalies due to mutant genes, when they are found to occur in greater frequencies than can be explained by the spontaneous mutation rate, are maintained at these higher frequencies in the population because they confer some selective advantage. The advantage, which is often much less visible than the disadvantages of the anomaly itself, may be direct or indirect—the advantage may be manifested

in the anomalous individual or, more likely, in those of his close relatives who are heterozygous carriers of the mutant gene. The advantages that accompany the anomaly may extend to the larger social group of which the genetically afflicted individual is a member.

Various kinds of creative intelligence and leadership talent, according to Karlsson, are the socially compensating advantages associated with such disadvantageous genetically conditioned anomalies as myopia, schizophrenia, alcoholism, and diabetes. There is, of course, already ample evidence that each of these conditions strongly involves genetic factors. The more unique point that Karlsson emphasizes is that a genetic by-product of these abnormalities is manifested as heightened brain stimulation, with its behavioral consequences. In Karlsson's words, "Persons who carry a gene for myopia, for schizophrenia, or for diabetes, and in particular those who possess favorable mutant genes of more than one kind, should often exhibit increased cerebral activity, and the whole community then benefits from their enhanced abilities" (p. 156).

The evidence for a correlation between myopia and IQ appears quite massive and convincing. Unfortunately, Karlsson makes no attempt to analyze the genetic nature of this correlation; presumably it is pleiotropic rather than due to linkage or to common assortment of the genes for both traits. Pleiotropism would seem to be a central concept for Karlsson's thesis.

The evidence for an association between schizophrenia and intellectual creativity is more sketchy and anecdotal, and many readers are likely to remain unconvinced. It is interesting, however, that examination of biographical anthologies of historic geniuses in literature, art, music, mathematics, and philosophy, compiled long before the appearance of Karlsson's thesis, show a much higher rate of psychotic disorders among this select group of famous creative geniuses than is found in the general population. There is clearly a phenomenon calling for scientific explanation, and Karlsson offers an intriguing, but as yet unsubstantiated, genetic hypothesis. He makes the following bold assertion: "... historical evidence suggests that persons capable of supremely brilliant reasoning, like that exhibited by Newton and Einstein, must harbor the schizophrenia gene. Presumably such individuals carry additional important genes which remain unidentified" (p. 165).

With such a daring thesis, one would prefer a more systematic argument than Karlsson presents. His treatment of the issues lies somewhere between the style of a scientific treatise and that of a popular science sort of book. It gives rather cursory reviews of the standard evidence for the heritability of intelligence and of schizophrenia and alcoholism. It is all

quite sound and sensible, and readers will appreciate Karlsson's calm and relaxed approach to highly controversial topics. Specialists in the field will find these parts quite routine and easily acceptable, although eyebrows will be raised by many behavioral geneticists upon reading Karlsson's statement that, "It is the belief of many geneticists that solutions to important genetic questions will still come from pedigree types of studies, and in particular this seems likely in the area of inheritance of human intelligence" (p. 16). This notion, right or wrong, goes against the current trend in the study of the genetics of IQ, which is based on statistically fitting polygenic models to the analysis of variance of large scale data on various kinships. Pedigree analysis has not yet proven fruitful in the study of polygenic traits, such as intelligence is believed to be. However, there are still legitimate arguments among qualified scientists regarding the genetic architecture of intelligence, and it is possible that as few as two or three major genes may have large effects which are blurred by the continuously distributed small effects of a highly polygenic system.

Readers will find puzzling gaps and omissions of highly relevant research in the book, and serious students will be frustrated by the many apparently factual statements that are unaccompanied by any bibliographic reference. There are excellent supporting references for many of Karlsson's assertions, which, to readers who are not familiar with this literature, may appear as mere conjecture rather than as well researched findings. There is actually a good deal more hidden scholarship in this book than meets the eye. However, the list of references is unfortunately very spotty, with certain glaring oversights. For example, the chapter on the genetics of schizophrenia takes no notice of the signal work of Shields and Gottesman, whose book is probably the most important scientific contribution of the decade on this topic. Their model for schizophrenia, incidentally, is at odds with Karlsson's theory of dominant autosomal transmission. Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that the specific mode of genetic transmission is still scientifically unsettled, although there is no longer any real question in scientific circles that genes play a big part in schizophrenia. The important recent study of the effects of the Dutch famine on mental test scores is briefly described but is not referenced, nor are even the names of its authors (Susser and Stein) mentioned. Interested students would thus have no way of tracking down the full report of this research.

Karlsson concludes this book with some of the most forthright statements anyone has dared to make in recent decades concerning the importance of eugenics to modern society. For this expression of wisdom he should indeed be congratulated, although he will also surely find himself blacklisted in some circles. Karls-

son presents a more cogent statement of the causes for concern about threatening countereugenic trends in our present-day society than I have encountered in any recent publications. It is a touchy topic, but it will be unwise to ignore Karlsson's plea that we think about it.

Arthur R. Jensen, Ph.D.
University of California
Berkeley, California

DE ROSIS, HELEN A. *Working with Patients: Introductory Guidelines for Psychotherapists*. Agathon Press, New York, 1977. xii + 194 pp. \$10.50.

This little book may easily find two types of audiences: the young therapist, and his or her supervisor. It is a warm, human treatise containing both the author's philosophy and many "how to's" which the beginning therapist will find useful and comforting. One of the best features of Dr. De Rosis' writing is her consistent search for islands of health in the patient. Over and over she guides the reader's attention to that which is functional in the patient. Her work seems always to be building greater strength, rather than destroying that which is dysfunctional.

The book contains 190 easily read pages; however, these pages are divided among 18 topics. These range from self-hatred to working with patients' parents, and from assumptions and presumptions to finding the good life. In other words, this is not a volume that one picks up casually to read from cover to cover in an evening's sitting. Rather, it is to be savored and enjoyed. It is not a well organized didactic treatise, nor does it pretend to be. A strength of the book is its clarity. Each thought that the author develops is very clearly explicated. Theory is rounded out with case studies. Through it all, the reader never loses track of the basic humaneness of its author. Unwittingly, I suspect, Dr. De Rosis has written a book on therapy which demystifies the topic. It is refreshing to dip into such material and not be mired down in jargon and convoluted theory which only leads around itself and back to nowhere.

The book has clarity, brevity, and a unique charm.

Lisa Robinson, Ph.D.
School of Nursing
University of Maryland
Baltimore, Maryland

GIORDANO, JOSEPH, AND GIORDANO, GRACE P. *The Ethno-cultural Factor in Mental Health*. Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, New York, 1977. iv + 51 pp. Paperback \$1.75.

Joseph Giordano, the senior author of this vibrant pamphlet, is Director of the Center on Group Identity

and Mental Health, Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, American Jewish Committee. Grace Pineiro Giordano, the co-author, is Assistant Director of Nursing, Mid-West Side Neighborhood Health Services Program, St. Luke's Hospital (New York City). In the introduction the authors note, "How to utilize ethnicity to create a more intimate sense of community without fostering unhealthy group chauvinism remains a major task. Within this framework we have reviewed mental health literature that deals with the ethno-cultural factor" (p. 2).

The pamphlet is organized into 17 pages of text and 34 pages of references. The sections of the text are divided into: conceptual context; the ethnic factor in the prevalence of mental illness; immigration, migration, and mental health; perception of illness and utilization of services; cultural barriers in treatment; effects of racism; from pathology to strength; coalitions; training; and a conclusion. The references number 472.

This pamphlet is not a scientific document. There is some confusion in its organization, and many of its references are anecdotal and polemical. The author's sense of urgency and devotion to an important theme does, however, come through. Clearly, there is a need for psychiatrists to abandon ethnocentric concepts and to appreciate the cultural factors that affect diagnosis and treatment of patients. For some patients the psychiatrist should reinforce ethnic pride, but for others assistance should be geared toward assimilation into mainstream culture (a topic not mentioned by the authors). By hopping on the cultural bandwagon we may tend to forget that folk-healers have their fair share of therapeutic failures. Schizophrenia in a Chicano is still schizophrenia, and the addition of a phenothiazine to a *curandero's* ritualistic regimen can work wonders.

As a consciousness-raising instrument the pamphlet is successful. Readers may be a bit put out, however, by the authors' barrage of well intentioned but undeveloped points. "Culture" is a subtle concept, and the marriage of psychiatry to anthropology, after a long flirtation, is going to take a lot of effort before it is truly functional. The author's desire to stimulate "an overall conceptual and ideological approach that integrates the ethno-cultural factor into all aspects of mental health practice" (p. 17) is laudatory; but now, after all the shouting, the work begins.

Armando R. Favazza, M.D., M.P.H.
University of Missouri-Columbia Medical Center
Columbia, Missouri

GREENBLATT, MILTON. *Psychopolitics*. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1978, xvii + 278 pp. \$18.50.

Psychopolitics is a disappointing book. The author, an eminent and distinguished psychiatrist, has a