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Obituary & Book Reviews

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Frank Ayd (1920-2008)

Frank Joseph Ayd, son of a paediatrician (who had bipolar affective disorder) and a Maryland graduate of 1945, was one of the early promoters of chlorpromazine for schizophrenia despite a keen awareness of potential adverse effects. The New York Times was enthusiastic during the 1950s about Ayd's work and suggested that chlorpromazine would save \$1 billion dollars on the mental health bill. His training in paediatrics was interrupted by World War Two when he was asked to perform surgery by the American Navy. Dismal failure in that role pushed him into psychiatry, in which he had no interest, at a VA hospital! He was impressed by insensitivity to pain and temperature in schizophrenic subjects. Why did they go about in shirt sleeves in freezing weather? He was equally impressed by the dramatic and positive effect of ECT on his father. He helped put neuropsychopharmacology on a sound academic footing in the USA. In those days there was little regulation of research and it was therefore largely of the empirical trial and error variety. Ayd was worried by the rapid deinstitutionalisation of psychotic patients in the 1960s without first providing adequate community supports. He was head of psychiatry at Franklin Square Hospital in Baltimore. He published numerous papers and books, not retiring until he was 83!

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Essentials of psychosomatic medicine

Levenson JL, ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing Inc. 2007. 590 pps including index.

This book is a condensed and updated version of its 2005 big brother American Psychiatric Publishing *Textbook of Psychosomatic Medicine*. Both texts are edited by James Levenson MD of Richmond, Virginia. On our side of the pond psychosomatic medicine still has undertones of psychoanalysis and a book with this title may mistakenly bring Arthur C Kolb's *Clinical Psychiatry* (1970s) to mind wherein (almost) every disorder, including the reticuloses, had some convoluted psychogenesis. Instead, *Essentials* is a well written, easy to read, evidence-based text of consultation-liaison (C/L) psychiatry. Authors hail from the US and UK.

The American experience of consultation-liaison (C/L) psychiatry dates from the Rockefeller-funded C/L-Psychosomatic Units at Boston, Duke and Colorado in the mid-1930s and Dunbar's *Emotions and Body Change* of the same vintage. Despite this longevity, the first certifying exam was not held until 2005. Psychosomatic medicine has now been recognised as a subspecialty in the US.

Apart from assessment and consultation issues, this text covers all the main medical and surgical fields, ranging from oncology and cardiology to neurosurgery and rehabilitation. It is well referenced and concise without losing much in the way of detail. I have no difficulty in recommending it as a beginner's guide to general hospital psychiatry.

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