

BOOK REVIEW

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Reviewing a new journal is a difficult task as one cannot focus on the content as one would a book or monograph; rather one must look at the journal as a sample of forthcoming issues and its potential worth as an addition to the various journals that deal with forensic psychiatry throughout the world.

The first issue reflects the fact that it is primarily a British Journal. On the one hand, psychiatrists from other countries will be interested in developments in the United Kingdom; on the other, the inevitable concentration on local policies and procedures may result in some problems in comprehension or applicability by the foreign reader, an aspect that is to be expected. Those interested in transcultural forensic psychiatry will undoubtedly find this journal a valuable addition to the field and a means of greater international intercourse.

The multidisciplinary editorial board has representation from other countries—Canada, U.S.A., the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and New Zealand, and the initial issue does contain articles from New Zealand and the U.S.A. At three issues a year for \$70.00 American, some might find the journal costly (the first issue had 131 pages).

Topics covered in the first issue include the history and scope of forensic psychiatry, the effect of sexual assault on the mental health of victims, psychiatric malpractice in the U.S.A., personality disorders, development of psychiatric services for offenders, and the role of the psychiatrist in capital punishment cases. A section on Legal Notes and Commentaries discusses recent significant cases.

I found the article on an English pioneer in forensic psychiatry, Maurice Hamblin Smith, of particular interest, especially since he had written an article on the Leopold-Loeb case in 1925 of which I was unaware.

The journal also includes sections on book reviews and correspondence. Obviously such a publication has the potential for significant contributions to the international world of forensic psychiatry, and so those involved in the interaction of law and psychiatry will look forward to the evolution of this new journal.

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