

cognitive status examination should not be missed. There are a few omissions. Somatoform disorders additional to pseudo-seizures as well as sleep disorders could have been mentioned and it would have been interesting to have a little more time spent on movement disorders, since they lend themselves so well to video presentations. However, I enjoyed the package, as I am sure trainees and tutors will. It should be used as a model for many other areas of medical teaching.

Lishman, W. A. (1997) *Organic Psychiatry* (3rd edn). Oxford: Blackwell Science.

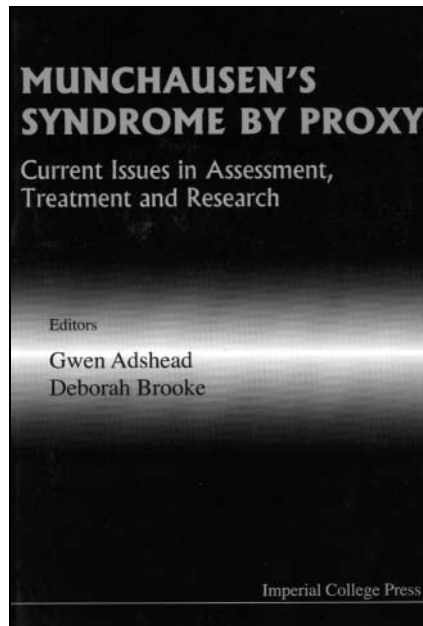
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Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy. Current Issues in Assessment, Treatment and Research

Edited by Gwen Adshead & Deborah Brooke. London: Imperial College Press. 2001. 238 pp. £29.00 (hb). ISBN 1 86094 134 6

The stated aim of this book is 'to provide a multi-disciplinary and international perspective on current understanding of Munchausen's syndrome by proxy' (MBPS). It fulfils this task efficiently. Beginning with a brief '20-year overview' of the subject, it offers an interesting international and cross-cultural view. The contributors are well-known in the field: Jureidini and Donald, Southall, Samuels, Jones and Newbold, Eminson, Bluglass and Bools. The latter writes well of new directions for research and service development for the future. The perspectives covered include MBPS in the medical system and primary care; legal, social work and *guardian ad litem* viewpoints; the detection and assessment of abusing families; and the treatment of perpetrators and victims.

Perhaps the most original chapter is by one of the editors, Gwen Adshead, on ethical and public policy issues in the management of MBPS. She explores the clinical dilemmas and consequent anxieties engendered by different clinical relationships and duties, which often clash in cases of MBPS. She also provides an overview of the power differentials and ethical



responsibilities within the doctor-patient relationship and of the sometimes conflicting responsibilities of the doctor to third parties, family and society. The issue of MBPS and child abuse is examined as a paradigmatic locus of especial tension and frank conflict for professionals, for example in the question of whether a doctor has 'a professional right to deceive in order to do good' – as in the case of covert video surveillance. These discussions deserve greater exploration.

There has been something of a glut of volumes on this subject in the past few years – in contrast to a relative paucity of research (e.g. Schreier & Libow, 1993; Parnell & Day, 1997; Eminson & Postlethwaite, 2000, for review see Cordess, 2001). Adshead & Brooke may be counted unfortunate to follow so closely in the footsteps of the last of these: this subject advances slowly and, since it has only a poor empirical base, there was little new to be said.

Although this book presents solid findings – such as they are – and viewpoints in its 17 chapters, each chapter is too brief to allow contributors to get into their authorial stride. The text, therefore, reads awkwardly, as something between lecture notes and narrative. Typographical errors, such as the erroneous rendering (twice) on the first page of the introduction of 'factitious' as 'fictitious' (a common but unfortunate mistake in a book on the subject), left me feeling that the editors had not been well served by the standard of publishing production.

Cordess, C. (2001) *Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy Abuse: A Practical Approach* (book review). *British Journal of Psychiatry*, **178**, 481–482.

Eminson, M. & Postlethwaite, R. J. (2000) *Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy Abuse: A Practical Approach*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

Parnell, T. F. & Day, D. D. (eds) (1997) *Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome. Misunderstood Child Abuse*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schreier, H. A. & Libow, J. A. (1993) *Hurting for Love. Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome*. New York: Guilford Press.

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Attention, Genes and ADHD

Edited by Florence Levy & David Hay. Hove: Brunner-Routledge. 2001. 272 pp. £30.00 (hb). ISBN 1 84169 193 3

Recent research on the neuroscience and genetics of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has transformed the intellectual landscape of its discourse, if not of modern child neuropsychiatry. This slender volume, with many high-quality reviews, represents one of its landmarks. It provides a state-of-the-art summary of major findings in both behavioural (quantitative) and molecular genetics of this fascinating disorder. Yet the editors go beyond the remit of such an undertaking: it proposes many fresh questions, as well as providing a critique of the limitations and methodological issues of works hitherto undertaken. This is therefore a book that would interest and intrigue non-specialists and experts alike.

The bulk of the book is on quantitative genetics, that is, genetic epidemiology based on twin and adoption studies. There are also chapters on molecular genetics, which deal with DNA, allelic frequency and candidate genes. These are two distinct intellectual disciplines that are sharply demarcated by differing methodologies and techniques. The editors have included an introductory chapter on quantitative genetics (Chapter 2) to equip non-specialist readers with basic principles of the subject and explanations on path diagrams. Thus, non-specialists need not be deterred. Chapter 3 examines the diagnostic validity of ADHD and its subtypes in relation to latent genetic substrates from a quantitative

genetic perspective. This is an excellent piece, including the original analysis on large-scale Australian Twin ADHD Project data. Chapter 4 investigates ADHD from a longitudinal developmental perspective. Three subsequent chapters focus on the quantitative genetics of three common groups of comorbid conditions in relation to ADHD: speech and language disorders; specific reading/spelling disability; and oppositional defiant conduct disorder. Their complex but fascinating relationships with ADHD are examined and decomposed at both the phenotypical and genetic levels. These are accessible and well-referenced reviews, written by leading experts in these fields. Chapter 8 investigates the gender-modifying effect on the prevalence and

severity of ADHD, and it includes fresh evidence that supports the polygenic multiple-threshold model. This is a thought-provoking piece that is both original and informative. Chapter 9 summarises the findings on single-gene studies of ADHD. Chapter 10 critically reviews the methodological issues and strategies of molecular genetics, with a short summary of well-known candidate genes. The chapter on comorbid Tourette syndrome gives an informative description of the condition, its neuropsychological correlates and patterns of familial inheritance. The concluding chapter provides a most authoritative critique of the reported findings, their methodological limitations and future directions of research.

This book gives an excellent, comprehensive review of major findings on the genetics of ADHD. It also examines the genetics of other comorbid conditions in relation to ADHD, in addition to exploring a broader view of ADHD in terms of both diagnostic validity and developmental variants. There are many fresh polemics, insights and original ideas, which will widen the reader's intellectual horizons to reach beyond the enclosed realms of 'heritability' and 'candidate genes'.

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