Pediatric Consultation Liaison Psychiatry. Edited by Charles E. Hollingworth, M.D. New York: S.P. Medical & Scientific Books, 295 pp., $25.00, 1983.

This book is a compilation of chapters by workers in the field of pediatrics, obstetrics, child psychiatry, social service, and other allied health fields. The authors have focused particularly on what can be done to maximize the quality of care for the admitted child and its family. The book is aimed specifically at the different disciplines who work with children as well as at parents of the hospitalized child.

The editor has contributed four chapters: referral for consultation, programme description, psychiatric aspects of physical illness and case studies. There is no major contribution from a senior pediatrician on the liaison team — a shortcoming. However, this section is well laid out, written in clear language and includes appendices on how the liaison service is to be used by ward staff, psychotropic medication policies as well as forms to be filled out by parents. A predischarge family conference is described which is designed to allow the entire family to hear representatives from each discipline discuss the post-hospital convalescence of the child. This is a welcome suggestion.

This multidisciplinary theme is taken up in two chapters on “The Comprehensive Rehabilitation Clinic” and “SCAN: A Hospital-Based Program for Identifying Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect”. The latter chapter is ably written by Paulson whose treatment of depression and suicide is similarly competent.

The chapters on teenage pregnancy and speech and language impairments, while useful, are typical of contributions which deal more with clinical problems per se than with the central theme of the book.

Practical aspects of the child’s admission - the play program, family preparation for admission, groups for siblings and occupational therapy - underscore the intent of this book which is humane, comprehensive care with good communication amongst the disciplines.

At the end of the book one looks for a list of additional references on the main theme referred to in the introduction. It is not to be found. Hollingworth's introductory chapter which should be the cornerstone of the book has only one reference. This could easily be accepted if the editor had not promised us richer fare; he quotes "for a decade we have promised us richer fare; he quotes “for a decade we have wanted a comprehensive book on pediatric consultation”. Has he fulfilled this purpose? Perhaps he has whetted the appetite.

There are no contributions on education, research or behavioural pediatrics or on the vital need for forging an alliance between pediatricians and child psychiatrists as described by Lebow et al. A chapter on general principles of consultation-liaison for which Lipowski's work could well be used as a model (2) is wanting, nor is there a section on somatoform disorders. In the section on case histories too many diagnoses are covered with a resultant lack of depth. With regards to families, only lip service is paid to this burgeoning component.

The book may be useful to non-psychiatric pediatric staff, but in comparison to another recent text (3), it lacks detail and will not hold the interest of the child psychiatrist interested in this highly topical area.

References
1. Lebow, H., et al. The integration of the emotional and surgical treatment of children hospitalized on a pediatric-surgical ward. Child Psychiatry Hum Dev, Spring 1983; 13(3).
2. Lipowski, Z.J. Current trends in consultation-liaison psychiatry. Can J Psychiatry 1983; 28(S).
3. Pediatric consultation-liaison: the psychiatric clinics of North America. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1982.

David L. Dickman, M.B. Toronto, Ontario

Aging and Mental Health: Positive Psychosocial and Biomedical Approaches by Robert N. Butler, M.D. and Myrna I. Lewis, ACSW. St. Louis: C.V. Mosby, 483 pp., 1982.

This is the third edition of a psychogeriatric textbook prepared by the Director of the National Institute on Aging at Bethesda (Butler) and a Washington private practice gerontology Social Worker (Lewis). The authors present the nature and problems of old age in section 1, and the evaluation, treatment, and prevention of these problems in section 2. Footnotes, references, tables, figures, and photographs complement the text and often provide a ready summary of data as well as sources for more detailed information. The appendices provide a useful reference of literature, organizations, government programs, grants, and training centers in the field of gerontology in the U.S. Glossaries and a subject and author index round out this easy to read book.

The authors sequentially present an overview of the demography and sociology of aging and point out the myriad of prejudicial, social, and political conditions predisposing to problems. Mental health workers encountering the common problems of old age such as loss, physical illness, loneliness, and also the functional and organic brain disorders, must also face the lack of resources, facilities, and funds. Nevertheless, as the problems and needs of the older people are described, the authors also suggest the approaches towards easing the individual's suffering. Encouraging the “life review” is an example of one therapeutic approach.

Although the functional and organic brain disorders are thoroughly listed and discussed, the emphasis is on social, situational, and familial problems. These problems are elucidated in terms of social, financial, and political factors. Readers are encouraged to understand these factors in order to be able to stimulate change and to mobilize existing resources and agencies.

Entire books have been written on the topics in each chapter, but the authors have summarized the problems of aging and mental health in the first section. This section
stands as a useful reference for anyone involved in geriatrics and particularly for psychiatric residents who are not specializing in psychogeriatrics.

The second section deals with evaluation, treatment, and prevention of problems. General treatment principles and diagnostic evaluation are thoroughly reviewed and include such history taking aids as the author's "Personal Data Form". In view of the Canadian problem of bed shortages, the chapters on "How to Keep People at Home and on Proper Institutional Care" are particularly relevant. They are fairly short chapters but include most of the current principles of treating older people. Specific treatments (psychotherapy, drugs, electroshock, etc.) and specific conditions (delirium, dementia, depression, paranoid states, insomnia, etc.) are listed and discussed. The too common occurrence of overmedication is pointed out, and such current thinking as deficiencies as possible causes of the degenerative dementias are summarized. Although complete, these discussions are more thoroughly covered in the larger texts, yet this book presents the information in a brief manner which can be referred to almost as a handbook.

In summary, Butler and Lewis have prepared a book which gives a thorough overview of the problems in old age and suggestions to ameliorate the problems where possible. There is an encouraging note throughout the book which tends to reinforce the position that older people deserve and can benefit from therapeutic intervention. As the geriatric population continues to increase, there will be an increasing need to understand their special problems, the interventions required, and the resources available (clinical, social, and educational/research). As an introduction to psychogeriatrics or as a quick reference for a psychogeriatric problem, this is an excellent book to have available.

Irving Silver, M.D.
Oakville, Ontario

Cults and the Family. Edited by Florence Kaslow and Marvin B. Sussman. New York: The Haworth Press, 192 pp., $24.95, 1982.

Once again there is a book offered which attempts to grapple with a controversial and popular subject which affects thousands of North American families, and once again the attempt is less than satisfactory. Perhaps it is the nature of the beast. This book is actually a collection of original papers written on the subject for Marriage and Family Review. Each paper is written by a different author or authors, and the perspectives and disciplines vary widely. Moreover, the tone, presentations and style are uneven, ranging from cogent and lucid, all the way to loose and obfuscating. Finally, the conclusions derived from their respective experiences, review of their own research and reading the relevant literature, cover the entire map of popular and professional opinion, so that an enquiring clinician or confused parent is not going to be any further ahead after wading through the material. The editors even offer a wordy disclaimer in the foreword, essentially removing any personal responsibility for the authenticity of the material.

Some of the better chapters are entitled "The Cult Phe-