Niels Birbaumer, Robert F. Schmidt

Biologische Psychologie

Springer, Heidelberg 1990

XIV + 695 pp., 48 tab., 422 fig.; DM 88.-

ISBN 3-540-15437-X

Dr. Niels Bierbaumer is Director of the Department of Clinical and Physiological Psychology, University of Tubingen, FRG, whereas Dr. Robert F. Schmidt functions as Director of the Department of Physiology, University of Würzburg, FRG.

The two authors define the term ‘biological psychology’ in the sense of a research movement by which the correlations between biological processes and behavior are examined. According to the authors, with regard to biological psychology, two main lines exist, namely the nearly complete dependency of psychological experience and behavior concerning neuronal processes on one hand as well as the influence of experience and behavior on neuronal processes on the other hand. In the view of the authors ‘dynamic cerebral nodal points are responsible for behavior modalities’. In detail, starting from 450 pages on the basis of 22 chapters including a very extensive and informative facts catalogue, this book presents an excellent overview with regard to all the functions of the organism from the viewpoint of physiological psychology. Bierbaumer’s and Schmidt’s book concerns a typical ‘pure’ scientific view concerning the human organism which includes the so to speak supposition that the natural sciences are optimally suitable to completely cover the specific human being. In this context, psychological phenomena are practically not treated at all. But this biologically physiological view, which is imposing as one-sided at first sight, may simultaneously stimulate the research particularly at the border between biological physiology and psychological medicine.

The reviewer must admit that initially, he was repeatedly ‘speechless’ because of the authors’ one-sidedness with regard to both their scientific view and their results. But following the reading of this book, the reviewer’s repeated ‘speechlessness’ gave way to an increasing interest concerning the biological physiology topic particularly with regard to those numerous biophysiological facts the knowledge of which is very important to those colleagues who are working in the field of psychological medicine, too. In this sense, the book represents a relevant basic information for the clinical psychosomaticist, too.

H. Freyberger, Hannover

W. Paulley, H.E. Pelser

Psychological Managements for Psychosomatic Disorders

Springer, Heidelberg 1989 XVI + 335 pp., soft; DM 98.-

ISBN 3-540-19298-8

The two main authors of this book are internationally well-known colleagues in the field of psychosomatic medicine. Dr. J.W. Paulley was formerly consultant physician at the Ipswich Hospitals, Ipswich, UK, and Dr. H.E. Pelser was formerly senior physician and head of the Endocrinological Outpatient Department, Amsterdam University Hospital, Amsterdam, The
Netherlands. Supplementary to the two main authors, 6 further colleagues are concerned, namely Drs. R.B. Coles (Northampton, UK), K.C. Draper (London, UK), U. Gieler (Marburg, FRG), H.A. Ripman (Ipswich, UK), R.H. Seville (Lancaster, UK) and U. Stangier (Marburg, FRG).

The book is introduced by a very appropriate foreword written by the great psychosomatic pioneer, Dr. J.J. Groen, Emeritus Professor of Medicine and Psychobiological Research, University of Jerusalem, Israel and Leiden, The Netherlands.

Starting from their wide-ranging experience with regard to patient care, teaching and research, the two main authors and their coworkers are able to offer some instructive guidance on the psychological management of psychosomatic disorders. With special regard to the patient-oriented needs in daily practice, Paulley and Pelser offer their clinicopsychosomatic findings on a threefold basis: first the presentation of precisely directed diagnostic interviews, second, the subsequent management indications and third, the brief survey concerning relevant references. In detail, 12 clinical chapters are systematically treated, namely the most important medical systems: the alimentary and respiratory tract; cardiovascular, blood and endocrine disorders; the immune and musculoskeletal system as well as anorexia nervosa, bulimia, induced vomiting and purging. Furthermore, the topics central nervous system, urological and skin disorders as well as gynecology, obstetrics and sexual function are considered. Indeed, on the basis of these 12 clinical chapters, Paulley’s and Pelser’s initially formulated aim may be realized namely with regard to both the benefit for patients and also bringing greater job satisfaction to doctors.

However, according to the reviewer’s opinion, the fact that two very important fields which are very relevant concerning the interdisciplinarily oriented aspect are not considered, namely oncology and factitious disease, is incomprehensible. Furthermore, an extremely unusual procedure is the two main authors’ dealing with the topic ear, nose, throat and eye disorders which includes a highly interdisciplinarily oriented importance, too. Here, Paulley and Pelser confine themselves to the simple statement: ‘We do not have sufficient experience in these fields to do more than offer the reader some key references’. Such simple statements are suitable to annoy the reader.

H. Freyberger, Hannover
Tim N. Gidal, Voiker Friedrich
Die Freudianer
Auf dem 13. Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Kongress, Luzern 1934
Verlag Internationale Psychoanalyse, München 1990
1984 pp., 150 fig.; DM 98.-
ISBN 3-621-26518-X

Tom N. Gidal, PhD, one of the authors of this book, born in Munich in 1909 as son of a Russian-Jewish family, now teaching and working intensively scientifically as Associate Professor at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, is one of the pioneers of modern photojournalism. At the age of 25 Gidal was the first photographer to whom the permission was given to systematically take photographs within a psychoanalytic congress, namely during the 13th Congress of the International Psychoanalytic Society, Luzern, Switzerland, in 1934, which was led by Ernest Jones. At the occasion of this congress which took place against the background of the Nazi
assumption of power the majority of psychoanalytic pioneers of the 2nd and 3rd generation were assembled for the last time. On one hand, controversy and ambivalent discussions with regard to the ensuring strategies of the psychoanalytic movement vis-à-vis the Nazis took place. On the other hand, epoch-making topics were presented, e.g., the lectures of Melanie Klein (‘Concerning the psychogenesis of the manic-depressive states’), Ernst Federn (‘Fundamentals with regard to the Ego-Psychology’), Michael Balint (The final aim of the psychoanalytic treatment’) and Franz Alexander (‘Psychogenic factors in the etiology of peptic ulcer’).

On the basis of both this marvellous atmosphere of Luzern and starting from his greatly creative activities, Gidal was able to present an unusual volume of highly interesting photographs (entitled ‘The Freudians’). In detail, Gidal presents 150 of 400 photographs in this book which particularly concern the following topics: dialogue and discussion scenes in the foyer of the congress hall and in the restaurant as well as photographs of walks and the trip on the Vierwaldstätter See. We see photographs of Anna Freud, Max Eitington, He-lene Deutsch, Karl Landauer, Melanie Klein, Franz Alexander, Ernst Federn, Rene Spitz and many other psychoanalysts. Simultaneously, on the basis of originally inspiring ‘free associations’, Gidal describes his memories concerning this memorable congress and its participants.

At the end of the review of this outstanding book, I should like to emphatically mention the name of the other editor, namely Dr. Volker Friedrich, born in 1942, who is both one of the leading coworkers of the well-known Balint Institute for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, Hamburg, FRG, as well as the author of remarkable contributions concerning clinicopsy-choanalytical topics and the history of psychoanalysis. Originally, Friedrich had not only the excellent idea to conceive this book but he also strongly motivated Gidal to publish some of his photographs. Moreover, Friedrich’s very meritorious contribution concerns the documentation of the Congress of Luzern entitled ‘Its importance in the psychoanalytic movement’.

H. Freyberger, Hannover

135