

Audio-Visual Aids to Teaching

Videotape Reviews

Tread Softly (UK, 1985, 51 mins)

ESCATA, the enterprising and innovative organisation which specialises in training material for health and social services professionals, does not claim mainly to produce educational films but rather, what it terms 'video assisted workshops'. This is an important distinction and should be borne in mind when viewing the 'Tread Softly' video which looks at the transition from large psychiatric hospitals to local community services and is intended for practitioners, planners, managers and members from both voluntary and statutory mental health services.

With some of their more recent productions ESCATA has put together powerful visual material, grabbing our emotions as well as our intellect, and we recognise its value at first viewing. You might be disappointed if you looked at 'Tread Softly' without realising that the 51 minutes of video form only a fragment of the one day workshop proposed in the accompanying notes.

As with all ESCATA workshop tapes, users are warned against showing the video out of context; in this course it is a particularly timely warning. The set of slides transferred to video, which show something of the horrors of the New York experience at a similar transition stage from large institution to 'community' provision, and the sometimes moving interviews with Eric Johnson and Joan Milburn, who are in English psychiatric patient hospitals, do not immediately have an obvious connection. Without the notes, some viewers would be at a loss to know what to do with the segments.

This is no shortcoming of the material and it is what the producers intend. The *Trainer's Notes*, integral to the process, are quite precise about how it should be used. They provide suggestions for the timing of different elements of the training, instructions about when the video sections should be used, plans for how the workshop accommodation and equipment might be utilised and detailed schemes for developing the discussion and activities of the participants. Trainers, who like to have a very clear pattern of how their day is to proceed, will welcome the carefully planned notes, which probably give just a manageable amount of help to many people: the written information runs to 18 pages. For those who prefer a less structured training situation where the group leader responds more pragmatically to the needs and interests of the trainees, the notes may tend to be overprescriptive. Although it is made clear that we are being given 'suggestions', the notes have a ring of authority and some users would find indications of a more open-ended style of teaching a useful addition.

ESCATA is an important pioneering organisation in developing training materials. 'Tread Softly' is good but not, in my opinion, one of their best productions. Used with

imagination, however, and careful preparation, it could be a useful tool for all of us concerned with training the key personnel who will make the move from large institutions to community as painless and effective as possible.

Production: East Sussex Consultancy & Training Agency. *Distribution:* ESCATA, 6 Pavilion Parade, Brighton BN2 1RA. Available for sale on all formats.

ELIZABETH GARRETT
*Director, Mental Health
Film Council*

Mental Health Act 1983 (UK, 1983, 28 mins)

Few people will have read the Mental Health Act 1983 from cover to cover and so the makers of this programme are to be congratulated on producing a timely, well-produced visual synopsis. The programme comes with an excellent transcript and contents but, in fact, the programme stands alone and can be watched without reference to these. It is divided into four parts; firstly the philosophy and background, the civil committals, criminal committals, and the final part covers the Mental Health Act Commission and rights for detained patients.

The programme was made entirely in a studio, which makes for rather dull viewing, though uses the well-trying technique of two presenters, which helps to keep interest and pace. It includes interviews with some notable experts and it is interesting to hear their views; it also makes good use of graphics.

The programme is of value to anybody who has to work with the Mental Health Act 1983, so that would include social workers and psychiatrists, for example. I think it is too specialised for undergraduates. In summary, a professional and well-made programme of interest to anybody working with the Mental Health Act 1983. However, I did find it rather relentless and heavy-going to watch.

Production: East Sussex Social Services. *Distribution:* ESCATA (address as above). Available for sale on all formats.

ANDREW MACAULAY
St George's Hospital, London

Psychiatric Formulation and Mental State (UK, 1982, 12 mins)

When viewing the videotape, the first question one has to ask is why it should be video rather than written or audio material. In this particular instance, that question is difficult to answer. The tape simply shows two psychiatrists reading a prepared script either on camera or voice-over to the legends making up the two mnemonics they propose. The result is a rather dull recitation of material which would not be likely to 'have them rolling in the aisles'.

As far as the material was concerned, they produced acceptable accounts of the formulation and mental state of a particular patient. They used two mnemonics, the first of which, IDJIMP, was unmemorable, while the second, ACTMAD, did have a quality to it which may help to lay it down in long-term memory. Even this was spoilt by the apologetic explanation that D really stood for organic but did not fit the mnemonic.

One could not in all honesty say that this tape could be

commended, other than for purely local use, thus giving the lecturer an 11-minute break before returning to explain and elaborate various points that are made.

Production: Leeds University Audio-Visual Service, Leeds LS2 9JT (Presenter: Dr. S. Baugh). Available for sale on all formats.

C. P. SEAGER
University of Sheffield

Mental Health and the Media

Channel 4

From September to December 1986 Channel 4 is presenting a season of programmes on mental health themes. Titles include:

Schizophrenia and the community—about people who have been diagnosed schizophrenic but are finding ways of living in the community.

Race and mental health—an examination of how black and Asian people are treated by the mental health 'establishment'.

Museums of madness—a series of three very different programmes which raise questions about our attitudes to mental illness and how they have been reflected historically.

A change of mind—a series about therapy.

Voices—this series which is regularly broadcast looks at psychoanalyses.

We're not mad... we're angry—a documentary/drama programme which aims to show that psychiatry is a means of social control. It is made entirely from the perspective of those people who have been treated by psychiatrists.

For further information about any of the programmes, contact: Derek Jones, Education Liaison Officer, Channel 4, 60 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2AX

BBC—Education

In January 1987 the BBC Continuing Education department begins a series of eight 10 minute films, *YOU IN MIND*, for transmission on Sundays at a time between 6.00 and 6.30 p.m. This slot, at a popular time, can sometimes reach as many as eleven million people.

The series is not about mental illness but aims to prevent ill health. It will take a practical approach with each programme showing good and bad coping strategies to encourage self help. It will hope to give people the feeling that they have control over their own mental health, and give useful information and sources which will help them to do this.

Individual programmes will look at:

Insomnia, Anxiety, Depression, Expressed Feelings—learning to say what you feel and how to be a good listener, *Time Pressure*—how to avoid stress at home and at work, *Assertiveness Training, Drug Taking*—tranquillisers and anti-depressants and their dangers, *Mind and Body*—an attitude changing programme featuring latest research which demonstrates mind and body unity and the approach of complementary therapy.

More information can be obtained from Angie Mason, Senior Education Officer, Continuing Education, BBC, Villiers House, The Broadway, London W5 2PA

North West Fellowship

This Fellowship gives advice and assistance to sufferers from schizophrenia and their families who live in the North West of England and aims to advance public understanding of the nature of schizophrenia. It runs day centres and housing and employment schemes and is developing self-

help groups of sufferers and their relatives throughout the region. Further information: North West Fellowship for the Support of Schizophrenia Sufferers and their Families, 46 Allen Street, Warrington, Cheshire WA2 7JB (telephone 0925 571680).