

scientific rigor of publications by encouraging outstanding scientific investigators to submit their work. They have continued to raise standards and at the same time have striven to achieve a balance and blend between the clinical and scientific. In this they have been uniquely successful so that there has always been a stir of excitement about each issue of a journal which incorporates the best of both worlds: modern developments in psychoanalysis and in scientific advances. But there is much more. There are for instance brief communications, special articles and not only book reviews but also film and videotape reviews.

What I admire most about this journal is that it is prepared to enunciate its philosophy, define its journal categories and publish its guidelines for reviewing a paper. Of particular interest is the editorial policy of 'blind' peer review so that papers are more likely to be judged fairly and impartially. The editors do not say whether they were tempted to experiment with a system of open peer review!

The editor and his board are to be congratulated on their 25th Anniversary Publication, which reveals the basis of their success as a leading journal in this field. It uniquely encapsulates the best of modern scholarship deriving from clinical and psychoanalytic practice combined with scientific developments and research in the field. It is to be recommended without reservation to all practitioners in the field.

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It is difficult to know how best to respond to this first issue of a new journal; scepticism or a cautious and conditional welcome. It is the journal of the British Holistic Medical Association and is edited by a psychiatrist, Anthony Fry. The editorial board and editorial advisory boards include several other psychiatrists but many of their members come from very varied backgrounds, and they include a theatre director, a journalist, an osteopath and a herbalist. The Editor in his opening editorial says that the journal will examine 'new methods of health care delivery and promotion' and will seek 'to examine whole-person approaches'. It will be 'looking at new models, and new, divergent and innovative ways of thinking about health and sickness and the relation between doctors, therapists and patients'.

It is not unreasonable to argue that there is a need for a new journal which is inter-disciplinary and focusses on the

'whole-person' aspects of health care for a wide audience. One must judge it by its success in tackling its aims and by the extent to which its intention to be innovative can be combined with a critical and well-informed style. It is unlikely that its readers are looking for technical argument or detailed presentation of experimental studies, but they do have a right to expect that papers are authoritative and present coherent and well-argued points of view. Dr Fry rather defensively admits that although submissions have been of a high standard they 'continue to reflect to some degree, the failure of the scientific and the humane really to get to grips with each other'.

This first issue contains an interesting account of hyper-ventilation and cardiac rehabilitation from a department of cardiology, a learned critical review of some of the central ideas of holistic medicine by a medically qualified medical sociologist and a well-written and critical review on the world of hypnosis in the treatment of cancer. It also includes the first of what is intended to be a regular series of reprints of classic papers; 16 of the 74 pages in the main section are devoted to a paper by Friedman and Roseman on type A behaviour pattern first published in 1971. In addition, there are two less satisfactory and more diffuse articles on the consultation and on the meaning of illness. Is this then the sort of contents that will persuade psychiatrists to look for forthcoming issues? Probably not.

Dr Fry has taken on a very difficult task. His aims and sentiments seem admirable but it seems doubtful the journal of an Association outside the mainstream of medicine can attract first-class contributions. I believe that psychiatrists and psychologists and others involved in research and clinical innovation in this area will prefer to look to existing journals where they know that they can reach their peers. The very diversity of holistic medicine which enables it to include the eccentric and the orthodox makes it unlikely that the journal will achieve real influence. It is too all embracing to achieve Dr Fry's blend of scientific method and humanism.

This journal is in some ways a welcome sign of the times, of an increasing interest in the wider role of medicine by doctors, associated professions, the general public. However, it suffers from having failed to attract many of those who have been pioneers of this approach in orthodox medicine. It is possible that holistic medicine as presented in the Association and journal will evolve and achieve authority and influence but meanwhile psychiatrists are unlikely to feel that they need extend their regular reading.

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