

mental institutions have largely improved surely owe a debt for the valuable insights provided by this and similar works.

Barton (1959) listed the factors commonly associated with Institutional Neurosis as follows: loss of contact with the outside world; enforced idleness; bossiness of medical and nursing staff; loss of personal friends, possessions and personal events; drugs; ward atmosphere and loss of prospects outside the Institution.

All these are studied by Goffman and the socio-psychopathological interaction of these factors amongst staff and patients are brilliantly analysed.

Surely even the best of our mental hospitals retain some of the useless, even harmful, residue of institutional traditions and further improvement is facilitated by a study of such works.

Dr. Beccle's review portrays a complacency which is surprising, considering the volume of criticism lately levelled at our less fortunate institutions where a deficiency of resources has resulted in a poor environment for the patients and the inevitable retention of some of the worst features of institutional life. Furthermore, the history of psychiatry clearly shows that periods of enlightenment and reform have at times been followed by eras of regression and repression. Therefore, a continual vigilance will always be necessary.

One welcomes the many important advances made over recent years, but regrets that the institutional mind too readily accepts the wide gap that persists between institutional and community standards of life, a gap that easily widens when conditions improve in the outside community.

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STENGEL PRIZE

DEAR SIR,

The first Stengel Prize will be awarded in 1970 to the candidate submitting the best written report of

research in a field related to psychiatry carried out during an appointment in any branch of medicine held in the area of the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board. Preference will be given to candidates qualified for not more than eight years at the time of the study.

Reports should be submitted in a form suitable for publication, and should be approximately 5,000 words in length, exclusive of graphs and tables. Two copies, together with the date of qualification and a brief statement of the appointment during which the research was carried out, should be addressed to me at the address below.

The closing date is 1 May, 1970.

C. P. SEAGER.

*Hon. Secretary, Committee of Management,
Stengel Prize Fund*

*Whiteley Wood Clinic,
Woofindin Road,
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POINT AND COUNTERPOINT

DEAR SIR,

It was interesting to compare the reviews of *Sense and Symbol* in the *Journal*—Volume 114, page 1044 and Volume 116, page 116.

'A generally impressive volume' or 'totally unacceptable' or perhaps different books.

G. H. B. BAKER.

*Long Grove Hospital,
Epsom, Surrey*

[These were respectively the American and the British editions of the book by Professor Miller and were sent us separately by the two publishers concerned. It was not realized at the time that these were one and the same, and, owing to an error, the author's name was omitted in the first of the two reviews. As Dr. Baker points out, readers will have had the benefit of two widely differing critical opinions. *Ed.*]