

NEWSLETTER Summer 2009

QUOTATION

CAPITALISM

"The trouble with the profit system has always been that it is highly unprofitable to most people". E B White 1899 – 1985.

ELWYN BROOKS WHITE American author and editor. He began a long association with the New Yorker in 1925; writing its 'Talk of the Town' column. His books include *Is Sex Necessary?* (1929), co-authored with JAMES THURBER, and his children's classic *Charlotte's Web* (1952).

VALEDICTORY EDITORIAL

In 2003 Dr Bapuji Rao asked if I could take over from him as chairman of the Society. As we are very good friends I had little choice and in 2004 I became chairman.

During the last decade of the 20th century all professional societies were in decline and the WPS was no exception. To survive, changes had to be made to attract younger colleagues. Soon it was re-launched in a new format. Themed day conferences to be held in north and south Wales became the overriding objective, membership was opened to all related professions and committed effective officers would be able to hold office for longer periods. A newsletter and website soon followed. The higher profile of the Society attracted new members.

Excellent teamwork realised our objectives. Bill Fraser our president has provided continuity, solidity, wise counsel and unfailing support. Our vice-presidents, Mike Shooter and Mike Owen, have been very helpful and supportive. Excellent local colleagues accepted key positions. Johannes Thome created our website and Keith Lloyd became conference organiser. Our meetings have been very successful with consistent high quality and around 100 attendees. From the beginning Keith's secretary was invaluable and Alison Lewis is now the Society's co-ordinator. The smooth running of the Society reflects her helpful efficient approach. More recently Anne-Marie Hutton has provided invaluable assistance particularly with the Ernest Jones lecture.

There are two other people who have done sterling work in the successful re-birth of the WPS. The first is our treasurer Elin Ellis. She has done an excellent job. Elin initially on her

own and then working with Alison, sorting out the status of our membership. This has been a very difficult task indeed. Karl Rice continued as secretary till last year. He also did an excellent job and I am grateful to him and also to Mick Dennis our new secretary.

During the last five years our links with Brittany have been consolidated. Dafydd Alun Jones and Hugh Bevan Jones had laid the foundation and much further development has occurred now. Huw Bevan Jones is stepping down as our official link person and we are extremely grateful to him for his total support to the Society and for linking up with Breton colleagues. It is fortunate that Keith speaks French and both he and the Professor of Psychiatry at Rennes, Bruno Millet, are keen for this unique link to continue to flourish.

A new innovation is our newsletter. This has been well received and I am very pleased that our new secretary Mick Dennis is now taking over as Editor.

Last year we explored new territory when we embarked on commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of Ernest Jones. The Society arranged for his grave, at Cheriton Church, to be cleaned and restored. Leon Kleimberg's lecture and the reception were well received and later the lecture was reprinted as a pamphlet.

The re-launch of the Society has been a success and there is every reason that this will continue. This is a good time for me to step down as chairman and editor of the Newsletter. I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to ensure that the WPS is a flourishing organisation and I wish it well for the future.

Don Williams

SPRING CONFERENCE 2009

The Dylan Thomas Centre in Swansea again provided an excellent backdrop for the Spring 2009 Joint Welsh Psychiatric Society and Welsh Division of Psychiatry Conference on May 8th. The emphasis was on forging partnerships to deliver positive outcomes for service users across the lifespan. It was encouraging to see a broad range of delegates, from those who are eminent in psychiatry in Wales to those embarking on their careers. This attendance reflects the regeneration and inclusiveness that the Society has seen over recent years.

Professor Lloyd had succeeded once more in securing an impressive line-up of speakers, including the current RCPsych President, Professor Dinesh Bhugra. Seating was for a change in cabaret style around tables, creating an intimate and involving feel to proceedings.

First speaker, Professor James Lindsay argued against the categorical approach of ICD10/DSMIV in our understanding of anxiety, favouring a dimensional approach to both anxiety and depression underpinning a concept of neurosis. He noted that generalized anxiety disorder is the most common anxiety disorder occurring in later life and provided evidence for a role of both supportive therapy and CBT in this group.

Dr Hodes moved to the opposite end of the age spectrum, providing an excellent overview of the treatment of depression in children and adolescents, and highlighting that 95% of major depressive episodes arise in children with longstanding difficulties. He discussed the controversies regarding NICE guidance on combined therapy and the use of anti-depressants and suicidality. He made a very thought provoking comment that whilst these concerns have led to reduced use of anti-depressants in adolescents, the rates of deliberate self harm have not subsequently altered on an ecological level.

Next Professor Dinesh Bhugra gave a very contemplative and reflective talk on the future role of the psychiatrist, emphasizing the individual within their social context. He considered key components of the role to be medical expert and healer, professional, manager, communicator, scholar, collaborator and advocate. He expressed concern that the healing role has somehow been largely lost along the way and that this is ground we must regain as professionals. He highlighted that the College is just publishing the core attributes and competencies of a psychiatrist in its 3rd edition of Good Psychiatric Practice and encouraged everyone to read these.

This stimulated a wider debate within the audience – Dr Michael Shooter (Past President RCPsych) explained that New Ways of Working was intended to free up consultants to

concentrate on these core attributes and what they enjoy - but unfortunately it hasn't fully delivered. Professor Bill Fraser expressed concern that the attribute list is too extensive and daunting and that we would do well to "concentrate on the heartland", whilst others were concerned that to define and list may have the effect of being limiting. Dr Shooter considered that it was vital to be able to carry the anxiety/stress/risk of the team, whilst Prof Bhugra added the importance of carrying the hope of the patient.

This led into a debate regarding psychiatric training and how this has become protocol and checklist driven, often to the detriment of meaningful engagement with trainees. It was commented that the demands of EWTD compliance has also meant that trainees have much less opportunity to model the core attributes of their seniors.

The audience agreed that the profession must be dynamic and be able to adapt and change but must still retain its core identity. A call to lunch then provided timely opportunity to mingle and chat with colleagues from across Wales and beyond, and to also view the excellent poster presentations on the mezzanine floor.

After lunch Prof Glyn Harrison gave a fascinating talk about the association of sub-clinical psychotic like symptoms (PLIKS) with subsequent clinical psychosis. He favours a dimensional view of psychosis, seeing it lying on a spectrum of normality, with 10-20% of non-clinical populations experiencing perceptual disorders at some point in time. He suggests that such subclinical psychosis predisposes to subsequent clinical psychosis and that the key factors tipping an individual towards psychosis in terms of persistence, subjective distress and functional impairment, include dopamine regulation, cognitive mechanisms and social experience.

To conclude the day's talks, Professor Pamela Taylor discussed the associations between psychosis and violence, which are multi-directional and complex. She highlighted that there has been no significant change in risk of violence by patients with schizophrenia over the last 35 years. However, dramatic case tragedies have had a disproportionate impact on changes in law and policy, and there is a tendency to bias in the driving forces behind public service reviews. She therefore explored the current worldwide collaborations that are attempting to examine the nature of associations and interactions between psychosis and violence on a population rather than single case level.

Professor Dinesh Bhugra then awarded the prizes for the poster presentations. It was acknowledged that all had been of a high standard, but the judges (Profs James Lindsay and Pamela Taylor) had succeeded in scoring and ranking them. Prizes were awarded in 3 categories – (1) Best Audit, (2) Best Research Idea, and (3) Best Research Findings.

The academic meeting was then brought to a conclusion and was followed by the Business meeting of the WPS. Minutes of this meeting will be produced separately.

All in all it was yet another successful and enjoyable meeting – with a diversity of high quality speakers, leading to thought provoking interaction and stimulating debate – which bodes well for the future of the Society as it looks forward to its 50th Anniversary in 2010.

Dr Liz Clarke-Smith

NEWS

The first Medical Research Council Centre in Wales was officially launched by Welsh Assembly Government First Minister Rhodri Morgan on Thursday 2 July, 2009, in Cardiff.

The MRC Centre for Neuropsychiatric Genetics and Genomics at Cardiff University is the first UK facility dedicated to harnessing the genetics revolution for research into mental disorders. The Centre will house scientists and postgraduate students undertaking research to understand mental illnesses like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder; degenerative brain disorders like Alzheimer's, Huntington's and Parkinson's; and developmental disorders like dyslexia and childhood depression.

The Centre builds on Cardiff's strength as a world leader in neuropsychiatric science. The investment totals more than £4m, with funding also coming from the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Office of Research and Development (WORD) and the University itself. The Centre will receive £2million from the MRC over five years.

The director of the new Centre is Professor Mike Owen, of Cardiff University's School of Medicine. Speaking at the launch, he said:

"Over the next five years, we want to use technological advances to identify new genes which put people at risk of brain disorders. We then want to work out exactly how these genes affect the operation of the brain and, ultimately, start building treatments which can tackle some of these terrible diseases.

We extend our warmest congratulations to Mike Owen and his team for creating such an impressive research centre in Cardiff. Through their hard work and total dedication Cardiff has become one of the leading psychiatric research centres in the world.

BOOK REVIEW

ALL IN THE MIND

Alastair Campbell

Hutchinson London 2008 297 pp £17.99

Alastair Campbell graduated in modern languages at Cambridge; he then went into journalism principally with the Mirror group. When Tony Blair became leader of the Labour Party, Campbell worked for him as press secretary, then director of communications and strategy from 1994 to 2003. Although Tony Blair's spin-doctor is frequently reviled, these negative feelings should be put on one side, as *All in the Mind* is an excellent first novel. It immediately grips the reader and is hard to put down. The main character is an unusual academic psychiatrist, interested in psychodynamic theory, sees patients every week and has a busy clinical practice.

Emily is a traumatised burns victim, Arta a Kosovan refugee recovering from rape. David Temple is a long-term depressive while the Rt Hon Ralph Hall MP lives in terror of his drink problem being exposed. All are different but share one thing; every week they spend an hour at the Prince Regent Hospital revealing the secrets of their lives to Professor Martin Sturrock. Little do they know that Sturrock's own mind is not the reassuring place they believe it to be? For years he has hidden in his work, ignoring his demons. But now his life is falling apart and his ghosts come back to haunt him, the only person he can talk to is a patient.

Set over a life-changing weekend Alastair Campbell's astonishing first novel delves deep into the human mind to create a gripping portrait of the strange co-dependency between patient and doctor. . Both a comedy and a tragedy of ordinary lives, it is rich in compassion for those whose days are spent on the edge of the abyss.

Novels in which the main character is a distinctively modern psychiatrist extend back to F Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* first published in 1938. *All in the Mind* is a worthy addition to this genre. It is an excellent read.

OBITUARY

Professor Tim Miles

Professor Miles, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Bangor University died 11th December 2008 at the age of 85. He was a true pioneer in the field of dyslexia, known internationally for his contributions to the field over 50 years of research. His approach encompassed both psychology and philosophy but what was unusual about him was his remarkable ability to take theory through to practical application.

After Oxford he was appointed lecturer at Bangor University in 1949 and later in 1963 he was appointed as the first Professor of Psychology. Tim Miles was the first to suggest that dyslexia was due to a constitutional disorder, a form of dysphasia.

In 1982 he published the Bangor Dyslexia Test, which was soon adopted worldwide as the diagnostic test for the condition. It's been translated to many languages including Welsh and Japanese. As direct results of his sterling work children with dyslexia are considered to have special needs and it is the statutory duty of schools to provide appropriate support.

In addition he pioneered the teaching of children with dyslexia and in 1974 the Bangor Dyslexia Unit was established to recruit and train teachers for this work. His lasting legacy will be the enormous difference he made to the lives of people with dyslexia.

Dr Ivor Gwyndaf Pryce MD, FRCPsych

Dr Pryce was a native of Cross Hands in the anthracite coal mining area of Carmarthenshire. After pre-clinical studies at University College Cardiff he graduated MB, BS in 1951 at University College Hospital, London. After two years in general practice in Merthyr Tydfil he decided to pursue a career in psychiatry. He trained at Goodmayes Hospital, Essex and at Bart's where he was a registrar with Professor Lindford Rees. In the early 1960s he became a consultant at Whitchurch Hospital, Cardiff where he ran the Day Hospital Tegfan with Dr Dafydd Huws.

The Welsh Psychiatric Society was important to him and he was Chairman for one year in the early 90's. He was a faithful member of the Society until the onset of Alzheimer's disease. After a long illness, which he bore with good grace and fortitude, he died on 7th December 2008. The funeral took place at Beulah, United Reformed Church, Rhiwbina, and Cardiff on 19th December. The chapel was full and the bilingual service was impressive with literary and musical items, in particular beautiful singing.

Dr Dafydd Huws, close colleague and friend, paid a moving tribute to a man whom he admired and held in close affection. Dafydd described a shy and reserved man who was thoroughly bilingual, cultured and with an impressive intellect but who also had a jaunty side. As a clinician he was committed to the welfare of chronic patients, displaying patience, tolerance and a non-judgemental attitude. He was conscientious, methodical and he carried out important research into long-term outcomes in chronic schizophrenia. Dafydd considered how fortunate he had been to have worked in tandem with such a man. Someone who shared his egalitarian non-conformist values and during breaks it was a real pleasure to have discussions with Gwyn about politics, poetry, philosophy, theology and religion.

In retirement he immersed himself in gardening and cultural pursuits, which included T S Elliot and History of art lectures. He was particularly interested in contemporary theology and religion and exercised about the need for religion to evolve so that it could engage more effectively with modern society. Dafydd ended his eulogy with the dictum; “Magodd Cymru ddim gwell dyn” – Wales has not produced a better man.

Dr Pryce’s first wife died in 1979. Their son Huw is Professor of Welsh History at Bangor University. His wife Trix to whom he was devoted survives him.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This remains at £10.00 per annum. For couples there is a joint subscription of £15.00. Retired members should be paying £7.00 per annum. Many colleagues have not taken advantage of this reduced rate and are encouraged to do so.

APPOINTMENTS

Sue Leekam, professor in the Department of Psychology Durham University has just been appointed to a new Chair in Autism at Cardiff University.

Dr Rob Poole, Chair in Psychiatry Wrexham Academic Unit

FUTURE EVENTS

Hydref 10-11 2009: Cynhadledd y Gymdeithas Feddygol-Welsh Medical Society Holiday Inn Caerdydd

Ymholiadau: Dr Elin Ellis: gwaith 01495 353701

E-bost: elinellisjones@Btinternet.com

Friday 13 November 2009 Symposium: The Welsh Division, Royal College of Psychiatrists and The Welsh Psychiatric Society in association with The academic departments of psychiatry in Wales Launch of FAIR DEAL Campaign and Update on Implementation of New Mental Health Act Legislation

St David's Park Hotel, Ewloe, Flintshire Further details: www.wps.swan.ac.uk E-mail: sconway@welshdiv.rcpsych.ac.uk