

Craven, J., and Rodin, G. M.: Psychiatric aspects of organ transplantation. Oxford: Oxford Medical Publications 1992. 256 pp., 1 fig. (ISBN 0-19-262073-8) US \$ 45.00

This is an important multi-authored book. The subject matter is significant, the chapters are good general reviews and, most importantly, there is an extensive bibliography, allowing the reader to access original source material. The book is organized into chapters on general topics and chapters that deal with issues related to transplantation of specific organs. Each chapter brings forth the author's particular style, points of view and often a classificatory, rather than explanatory, exposition. The language used is usually clear, but often words representing complex ideas like assessment, optimization, high risk, compliance, suitability, etc., are used without definition or a crisp contextual meaning, sometimes leaving the reader at a loss. There is an interesting and revealing statement in the chapter titled 'Assessment of transplant candidates and prediction of outcome' that goes: 'Although the final decision to accept or defer a patient for transplant typically rests with the program head, the process will be stressful for all who are involved.' Such imagery of team

anxiety relieved by an autocrat, if representing the norm, deserves exploration in a book itself. What should we think about the poor patient?

The major strength of the book is the text dealing with specific psychiatric and psychological problems. The chapter on children and adolescents is particularly descriptive and important since much is taken for granted by the transplant community. Important also is the chapter and excellent reference list on psychotherapy and counselling with transplant patients.

The minor weakness of the book is the occasional diversion to the non-psychiatric and non-psychological ground of different domains of ethics, allocation, selection of recipients, religious considerations, organ donation and procurement. They are usually brief reviews of extensive and complex topics and may be useful to the expert on psychosocial matters, if only for an overview.

This is a reference book for the medical library and the shelves of transplant professionals and para-professionals for sure, and will well serve the clinicians actively engaged in clinical transplant programs.

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