

Segal, et al, presents the effects of psychological disability on social networks whilst Hatfield (1997) discusses tension brought about in the family as a result of mental illness. The writers call for professional intervention to these problems.

Whilst Lightman presents suitable methods of social planning and community housing to assist individuals discharged from psychiatric institutions, Ronel suggests how self-help programmes can assist drug-dependent individuals to live independently.

The articles in the book have been designed on a manner that helps social workers understand where they fit into psychiatry as a discipline. It is certain to assist them in gaining confidence in exploring this area which does not normally feature as a priority in traditional social work. The articles also help student social workers and society to appreciate how social work interventive measures can alleviate problems encountered by the mentally ill. The information captured in the articles is sure to build trust and good relationships between medical and social work personnel.

*Reviewed by Violet Matimba-Masuku, Lecturer, School of Social Work, Harare.*

**Cutting the Gordian Knot. The Benefits of Girls' Education in Sub-Saharan Africa**, Ann Cotton & Richard Syge (eds), 25 Wordsworth Grove, Cambridge CB3 9HH, UK, ISBN: 0-9532907-0-0, Copies available from CamFed at £15 (Plus postage & packaging)

The need for sustained community-based action to reverse the high rate at which girls in sub-Saharan Africa drop out from school is underlined in a new book just published by the Cambridge Female Education Trust (CamFed) in association with the African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge. A compilation of papers presented to CamFed Seminars in Cambridge, Harare and Accra, the book is an important contribution on the widening international debate on girls' education.

Clare Short, the UK Secretary of State for International Development, applauds the editors' emphasis on the need for study of the problem to shift towards finding real solutions. In the book's Foreword, Ms Short calls for "*approaches and strategies which are both imaginative and realistic,*" saying that women and girls who fail to receive an education "are unable to develop their full talent and are locked into a position of powerlessness."

The book, *Cutting the Gordian Knot. The Benefits of Girls' Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*, edited by Ann Cotton and Richard Syge, analyses the reasons for the high drop-out rate of girls throughout sub-Saharan Africa and examines the strategies being formulated by governments, international agencies and non-governmental organisations to encourage more girls to stay at school.

The contributors, who include educationalists and government officials, enumerate a wide range of obstacles to girls' chances of receiving an education, including parents' inability to pay, a shortage of schools and teachers, the long distances that children often have to travel to school, a gender bias in favour of boys, a perception that boys have better job opportunities than girls, pressure for early marriage of girls, or the risks of sexual harassment and pregnancy. The common ingredient, say the editors, is a context of persistent poverty. The focus of action, they add, has to be at the community level, through partnerships between all those who are committed to spreading the benefits of education.

The importance that African governments are beginning to place on redressing gender imbalances in their educational systems is underlined by the contribution of ministers and government officials from Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Educating girls, say Ann Cotton and Richard Syngé, is "*an investment in better standards of living in the future, with multiplier effects in terms of health, nutrition, hygiene, smaller families and women's improved social status. Equally, the process of family and community decision-making about girls' education can become part and parcel of the removal of the family's and community's own social, economic and even political barriers to progress.*"

– Editor, *Journal of Social Development in Africa*

### **Tales from Family Therapy – Life Changing Clinical Experiences (1997)**

eds Frank N Thomas, Thorana S Nelson, The Haworth Press, New York, London, ISBN: 0-7890-0065-2 (h/b); 0-7890-0450-X (p/b), 304 pp inc index, Price: US\$49.95 (h/b); US\$24.95 (p/b).

Book reviewers can get to keep the book reviewed, but although I usually still try to avoid the onerous task of reviewing a book, this one was just too good to miss! If, like me, you find most academic books dry and difficult and would rather read a novel given the choice, then this one is for you. I could hardly put it down – innumerable (53 in fact) short and interesting accounts by therapists of cases which had moved and changed them in some way. I think both beginners and experienced therapists could learn more about the actual practice of family therapy and being a therapist through this than by almost any other means.

The book has sections which include Therapy with Families, Couples, Children, Medical Issues, Humour and just Remarkable Clients generally. Difficult Cases, Use of Self, Collaboration and Supervision are some of the other areas addressed. Although most cases are American (after all what else do you expect from Americans?), there are a few from Australia, Norway, India, Canada and New