

Howard Parad, H.L.P. Resnik, Libbie G. Parad (eds). *Emergency and Disaster Management: A Mental Health Sourcebook*. Bowie, Maryland: Charles Press, 1976, 497 pp.

The real value of this book lies in the fact that it is among the first to collate a body of knowledge about emergency mental health and disaster assistance in the United States in one volume. There is little doubt that it touches upon some much needed information in the expanding and exciting area of disaster assistance. New workers in the disaster assistance field will find the book of more value than seasoned performers. For the novice, it can serve as a catalyst to engender interest in some useful dimensions of the mental health field.

The topics stated in the preface are generally meaningful, but the definition of an emergency is open to real question. The authors define an emergency as "some unforeseen, isolated incident, which if unresponded to, will result in life threatening or psychologically damaging consequences". Numerous mental health emergencies are neither isolated, nor unforeseen. While they may bring about psychological infirmities, it is certainly not foreordained, and much research still needs to be performed on this matter.

A disparity exists between the five inter-related factors which the authors give as stimulating the preparation of the book and the headings in the table of contents. A shorter and less cumbersome sourcebook might have been of more value to the many crisis workers and paraprofessionals throughout the country.

It will be helpful to review the sections in sequence. The first section, entitled "Emergency Mental Health Services: Program Designs and Perspectives," omits mention of important high-risk groups, such as those from disadvantaged and minority populations. A specific focus upon research and training needs in emergency mental health and disaster management would have been helpful as well.

The work concentrates largely upon anecdotal and clinical material, with little emphasis placed upon published research studies. Since this is not a clinical handbook, but a book of source material, more research information should have been included, at least in bibliographic form, with recommendations to the reader. The authors have prepared a good list of community resources at the end of the third section, which will be helpful to those interested in participating in emergency mental health and disaster work.

The comment on the dust jacket addressing the variety of professionals fails to include clinical psychology and research sociology. Some of the foremost contributions to emergency mental health and disaster management have been made by these two disciplines. For example, in suicide prevention and crisis intervention numerous well-known figures are not mentioned. These include psychologists: Albert Cain, who made significant contributions with survivor victims and work with children; Robert Kastenbaum and Herman Feifel, in the field of death and dying; and Edwin Shneidman, who has been one of the pillars in the suicide prevention movement for more than two decades. Such sociologists as Warren Breed and Jack Douglas are absent.

Section II, which covers crisis intervention with individuals, families, and groups, could have been a much stronger component in the book. The various crises listed for discussion are limited and fail to include some important components. Illustratively, crises associated with substance abuse, financial problems, medical disorders, occupational and academic difficulties, rape, child abuse, and venereal disease, are not dealt with. To this reviewer, some of the most significant articles are those by Spiegel, addressing third party intervention and community conflicts, which are of great importance in riots and strikes; the work by Bard, in reshaping the attitudes taken by police as intervening agents in family crisis; and the potential use of behavior therapy as an inter-

vention technique in family crisis by Alevizos and Liberman. These spheres of conflict can develop into emergencies affecting large numbers of people. Defusing community disorders and those involving police and entire families is of utmost importance in resolving crisis disorders. Alevizos and Liberman stir the reader's interest with a straightforward presentation on the possibilities for behavior therapy techniques, since these methods are concrete and still being developed.

Section IV focuses upon the value of disaster assistance as an exciting new dimension of crisis intervention and training. The work of Stephen Howard and his associates in Southern California, dealing with the problems experienced by children and families after the San Fernando earthquake, would have been a useful addition. Even so, some of the richest material in the book is that dealing with recent disasters. Stimulating contributions are articulated by Mardi Horowitz and Dwight Harshbarger. Horowitz elaborates upon different phases of the treatment process and lists tables covering common stress responses, and the classification of response symptoms according to priorities of treatment determined by the existing status of the patient. This is challenging material for the researcher and clinician alike. Although Horowitz does not take account of the short-term aspects of crisis counseling in disaster work, refinements in the crisis intervention process are inherent in this chapter.

Harshbarger wisely points out that some Government agencies are naive in believing that psychological, sociological, and ecological aspects of disaster planning enter only into the third phase. Officials in many Government agencies are not mental health experts, and policy decisions are sometimes improperly made. Recognition of the necessity for pre-crisis training in preparedness programs is an illustration. Intervention is required before, during, and after a disaster if it is to be complete. Crisis counselors ought to be available at one-stop centers immediately after disasters, and in follow-up programs in the ensuing

months and weeks, in order to deal with the delayed depressions, hostilities, and the like, which often surface at those times.

Frequently overlooked in the assessment of disaster work is the importance of being fully acquainted with the subcultural components in the stricken communities. The fabric of each society must be understood and kept intact prior to diagnostic and crisis counseling activities. The organizations and systems involved need to be evaluated. Serious pathology may lie within the system, or the administrative aspects of the organization, as well as within and among individuals. Quarantelli and his associates, at the Disaster Research Center at Ohio State University, have been addressing these issues.

The fourth section of the work covers preventive programming. The chapter on a "warm line" for worried parents is intriguing. This is a logical extension of the "hot line" for emergency situations. Preventive services in mental health can be worth more than the proverbial pound of cure when properly done. Each preparedness program ought to incorporate crisis intervention in mental health. Paraprofessionals can be trained in psychological first aid, and every course in physical first aid should incorporate a mental health component.

Despite its shortcomings, this is a worthwhile book for all professionals and nonprofessionals, especially in American society, interested in emergency mental health and disaster management. It can serve as a book of readings to supplement disaster management training. Local agencies would be well advised to prepare a training course with a manual of case material, structural, administrative, and organizational guidelines for crisis workers with this book as a supplement. In that way it might be maximally useful to all parties concerned.

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