

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

**Sathnam Sanghera. If you don't know me by now: A memoir of love, secrets and lies in Wolverhampton. Viking; 2008. Pp 336, £16.99, ISBN 9 780670916702.** Reviewed by P Grewal in *BMJ* 2008; 336:893.

The author is a Sikh growing up in the UK, who discovers that his father and sister had schizophrenia. His mother hid the diagnosis from all family members, and the author stumbled upon it while in his 20s. The reviewer states that the author writes with sensitivity about the difficulties of negotiating the mental health system in the UK, the compounding factors of a different understanding of mental illness in different cultures, and the invaluable support that families can provide.

**Vincente Navarro, ed. Neoliberalism, globalization and inequalities: Consequences for health and quality of life. Baywood Publishing Company; 2007. Pp 518, US\$ 54, ISBN 0-89503-344-4.** Reviewed by M Whitehead in *Lancet* 2008; 371:1155-56.

The reviewer points out that the current fashion is to emphasise economic benefits in every field, even health care. That said, a country's economy can improve if it improves the health of its citizens. This is not a new idea; it was well known to the slave owners who took care of the health of their most productive slaves. A truly "healthy" economic policy should use resources for the betterment of the poor and sick, children and elderly, even though they may not be the most productive citizens, while an "unhealthy" economic policy will direct resources towards those who are already well-to-do and healthy. It is the unhealthy policies that are being promoted under neoliberalism and globalisation. The many contributors to this book scrutinise claims that are made in this era of globalisation, claims that are not backed by evidence. One of these is that individual countries do not have the freedom to shape their own policies. This view leads to apathy, while the reality is that those countries with a strong democratic tradition manage to maintain their welfare policies while also competing successfully in the global market. The reviewer recommends this book to all who feel that national politics are irrelevant in this era of globalisation.

**Anne Firth Murray. From outrage to courage: Women taking action for health and justice. Common Courage Press; 2008. Pp 332, US\$ 24.95, ISBN 1-56751-390-5.** Reviewed by A M Starrs in *Lancet* 2008; 371:1237-38.

Women's health is important in itself, as a human right, and not simply as a tool to improve economic conditions. However, the reviewer notes, to make people in power take note and formulate correct policies, it is better to emphasise the economic value of an initiative. The author, through descriptions of small, grassroots groups, shows how women are bringing about change in very difficult situations.

**Sandeep Jauhar. Intern: A doctor's initiation. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2008. Pp 300. US\$ 25, ISBN 0-374-14659-4.** Reviewed by N Raizman in *Lancet* 2008; 371:1328.

According to the reviewer, this book is superior to most other accounts of doctors writing about the hard times they went through in training because it describes the traumatic events without trying to paint the author in a saintly light. The author narrates events where he played a less than stellar role and some where his presence made a crucial difference to a person's life. The book describes life both in the hospital and outside it, and also describes the toll that medical training takes.

**Julian Le Grand. The other invisible hand: Delivering public services through choice and competition. Princeton University Press; 2007. Pp 208, US\$ 24.95 (£14.95), ISBN 0-691-12936-5.** Reviewed by C Ham in *Lancet* 2008; 371:1496.

The author feels that competition is crucial for reform to "counteract the risks of self-interested behaviour by providers, the middle-class bias of reforms that rely on articulate users and the disempowerment that results from over-reliance on targets".

**Robert Wicks. The resilient clinician. Oxford University Press; 2008. Pp 272, £17.99, ISBN 0-195-31697-5.** Reviewed by D Palumbo in *Lancet* 2008; 371:1570.

This book, kept purposefully short so that it does not overwhelm the overextended mental health professional, "catalogues the familiar stressors that so often lead clinicians to burn out and then suggests self-guided exercises to provide balance in one's life".

**Evaluating the Science and Ethics of Research on Humans: A Guide for IRB Members Mazur DJ. PP 252. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ Pr; 2007. \$29.95. ISBN 9780801885013.** Reviewed by Dickens, BM in *Ann Int Med* 2008; 148: 796.

This book, meant specifically for members of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), explains the "terms and concepts that reviewers must understand for compliance with U.S. regulations and describes the materials that investigators should submit for reviewers' scrutiny."

**In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction Gabor Maté MD; Knopf Canada; 2008; PP 480. \$34.95 ISBN 978-0-676-97740-0.** Reviewed by Skinner, WJW in *CMAJ* 2008; May 6, 2008; 178: 1325-6

The author, a staff doctor at a shelter for the homeless in Vancouver, Canada, sees addiction as a continuum and stresses that all of us have some form of addiction "any repeated behaviour, substance-related or not, in which a person feels compelled to persist, regardless of its negative consequences on his life and the lives of others." He feels that the process of addiction is important to understand as it is at the root of addiction, whether to drugs or habits like compulsive shopping. "He proposes an approach of "compassionate curiosity," which encapsulates the wisdom of many of humanistic therapies for addiction problems."