

PSYCHIATRY

Pills Help Delinquents

► **DELINQUENT BOYS** in a training school when given medicine—either a tranquilizer or a sugar pill—for research behave better and are much less of a problem to the administration.

This was learned from a study of 53 committed boys aged from 10 to 15 years, reported to the American Psychiatric Association in Chicago by Drs. Peter A. Molling and Leon Eisenberg of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, and Arthur W. Lockner Jr., also of Johns Hopkins, and Robert J. Sauls, assistant superintendent of Boys' Village, Cheltenham, Md.

Twenty-six boys in cottage A were given a tranquilizer, perphenazine, or a placebo (sugar pill without medicinal content) but neither the boys nor the experimenters knew which boys got the tranquilizer. A comparison group of 27 boys in cottage B got no medication.

Results were somewhat surprising to the investigators. Boys on the tranquilizer behaved much better. But so did the boys on the sugar pills. This lasted as long as the medication was continued.

After it was stopped, the boys on placebo continued to show improved behavior. Those who had been taking the perphenazine showed a rebound in symptoms when the medication was stopped.

Meanwhile, the 27 boys in cottage B without any medication, fake or real, were consistent in their problem behavior.

Evidently the expectancy of relief through medication, by either the delinquents or the house parents or both, leads to improvement in behavior among the training school boys, the investigators concluded.

It would appear, they said, that the very undertaking of research in the training school has potentialities for social good regardless of what the experiments show.

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Hypnosis—Mental Illness

► **HYPNOSIS** by an unqualified person can actually help cause mental illness.

What is believed to be the first case in medical-legal history in which hypnosis was accepted as contributory, although not entirely responsible, for mental illness was reported to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Chicago by Dr. Bernard Teitel of Long Beach, Calif.

The case was that of a 45-year-old woman whose back was injured while she was working as a restaurant helper. When medicine and bindings failed to help, she was referred to a neurologist. He recommended a course in hypnosis. She took a course of six hypnosis treatments. The therapist, although a professional person, was not a psychiatrist.

In this case there was unmistakable evidence of what psychiatrists call a schizoid personality—the kind of person who is withdrawn, seclusive, shut-in. The woman

showed marked emotional detachment and fearfulness.

For the next nine months, the woman moved from one rooming house to another in rapid succession. She was trying to escape from persons who were “controlling her mind, hypnotizing her and attempting to harm her.”

After the nine months of running, she had to be put in a hospital for treatment.

Individuals with schizoid type of personality development have an above-average chance of becoming mentally ill after hypnosis, Dr. Teitel told the psychiatrists. He warned them against using hypnosis with this kind of patient.

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Long Unhappy Marriages

► **SOMETIMES** a marriage is so disturbing to both husband and wife and appears so unsatisfactory to all observers that it seems headed for an immediate crack-up and yet it will unaccountably endure for years.

Study of 12 such long-standing discordant marriages showed that the very painfulness of the life together served a psychological purpose for both husband and wife.

Pleasurable adult sexuality was not a part of the patients' lives, within the marriage or outside it, Drs. Marietta Houston and R. B. Forman, psychiatrists of the Menninger Foundation, Topeka, Kans., reported at the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Chicago.

To the husband, life with the wife seemed to repeat his relationship with the mother of his childhood. Any frustration roused in him hostility toward his wife

MEDICINE

Veins Aid in Heart Attack

► **DURING HEART ATTACKS**, tiny “watchdog” blood vessels in the stomach and intestinal walls automatically shut down to assure adequate blood supply to more vital brain and heart tissue. This emergency blood diversion frequently can result in gastrointestinal damage.

Doctors for many years have noted abdominal stress associated with heart disorders. Scarred intestines, ulcers and other signs of gastrointestinal disorders have been found at autopsy of persons who died of a heart attack.

There had been no satisfactory explanation of how a circulatory disturbance remote from the gastrointestinal tract could so damage the stomach and intestines. Now Drs. Eliot Corday, David W. Irving, Herbert Gold and Harold Bernstein of the University of California, Los Angeles, Medical School and Cedars of Lebanon Research Institute apparently have the answer.

Using special electromagnetic flow meters

with the same intensity that in childhood he blamed his mother for everything that went wrong.

As for the wives, the close attachment they had with their mothers in childhood continues much the same in adulthood either in fact or in fantasy.

The wives were frigid and the husbands periodically impotent. Each sought excessive gratification from the other, and non-fulfillment led to infantile, demanding attitudes, childish expressions of anger, and cruel, sadistic behavior.

Only when one of the couple withdrew somewhat from the intense relationship of the marriage was the equilibrium of the situation upset.

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Sex Ideas Are the Same

► **FREUD'S IDEAS** about sex are identical with those of the Catholic moral philosopher, St. Thomas Aquinas, Dr. Martin Hoffman, Syracuse, N. Y., psychoanalyst, told the meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association in Chicago.

Their definitions of what is normal sexual behavior and what is abnormal or perverse are essentially the same and can be traced to Judean-Christian moral teaching, Dr. Hoffman said.

It is Freud's great genius as a clinician, he reported, that has served to somewhat obscure the fact that Freud did introduce some moral values into his scientific theorizing.

We now know, he said, that science is not able to tell us that one form of behavior is better or worse than another; this determination can only come from ethics. But when Freud formulated his now famous sexual theory in 1905, he did not take this distinction sufficiently into account, perhaps because it was so new.

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and computers, the investigators measured blood flow in the tract during abnormal racing heart rhythms and heart attacks. They found the small blood vessels in stomach and intestinal walls contracted when blood pressure dropped, shutting off the blood supply to these areas.

They concluded that this is a “watchdog” mechanism for the body's circulation. It assures that at least a meager blood supply is saved during the shock that follows heart attack and hemorrhage so that vital brain and heart tissue may be nourished. During the process, however, stomach and intestinal tissue is seriously damaged from lack of nourishing blood, they reported at the American College of Physicians meeting in Miami Beach, Fla.

Fortunately, humans have an excess of such tissue, the investigators pointed out. Thus they generally have enough left to carry on nutritional needs. Otherwise death would occur after such a shock state.

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