

New Job for Psychiatry

➤ **FACED** with the impact of Medicare, expanded insurance benefits and new community health centers psychiatrists are hopefully—some say desperately—reaching for new concepts to embrace this immense task.

Traditional analytical therapy obviously cannot do the job. Large numbers of people—the aged, the poor, the deprived—will be seeking help until now denied them. There simply will not be enough time or enough psychiatrists.

Freudian theory is not obsolete, psychiatrists were quick to interpose in any discussion of new approaches, but throughout their annual convention in Atlantic City, ran the terms: computer, general systems theory, transactional analysis, social psychiatry, interdisciplinary services.

For the first time in its history, the American Psychiatric Association staged a session called General Systems Theory (GST).

Systems theory has been used with

considerable success to plot business and industrial operations. But can it be applied to alleviate the complexity of human suffering?

The concept of systems theory is a slippery one when it comes to human behavior, but, as one psychiatrist said, perhaps its appeal is that "it is so beautifully vague."

Vague or not, systems theory has an impressive list of pioneers to its name such as Drs. Karl Menninger and Roy Grinker, and the movement is gaining considerable momentum.

As it applies to society, GST is basically a change of focus, said Dr. William Gray of the Massachusetts General Hospital. Rather than focusing on one thing, as on an individual in psychoanalysis, it focuses on many things, particularly on the confrontation between those things.

Each unit, whether it be a human being, a family, a newspaper, a chain of newspapers, a city, a nation, is a system (with subsystems). How these

units interact when they come face to face is a test of how well or ill the system is. Therefore, the confrontation (or interface), if it is out of whack, is the thing needing adjustment.

In a community center run with GST, said Dr. Frederick Duhl of Brookline, Mass., a man on his first visit would be questioned for medical, social, psychological and family data. The goal would be to discover all of his disrupted interfaces then arrange integrated treatment. Perhaps the man would have to change his attitude to live in the society; perhaps the best solution would be to change the society.

The dangers of community health centers, said Dr. Duhl, are that they may become fossilized, that treatment will not truly be transdisciplinary, and that psychiatrists, social workers, medical specialists, sociologists, will remain specialists, as they have been for the past century, resulting in fragmented services and sliced up citizens.

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Nurturing New Scientists

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exceptional aptitude for a creative and productive career in science.

We are here to honor young men and women who have demonstrated by their conception and execution of some science project that they have a strong motivation and exceptional promise for a scientific education. I think it is quite proper that we pause on regular occasions to acknowledge the intellectual, esthetic and idealistic aspirations of our young people and encourage them by recognizing their academic excellence. Not unnaturally, a young person is influenced to seek goals which are recognized and respected.

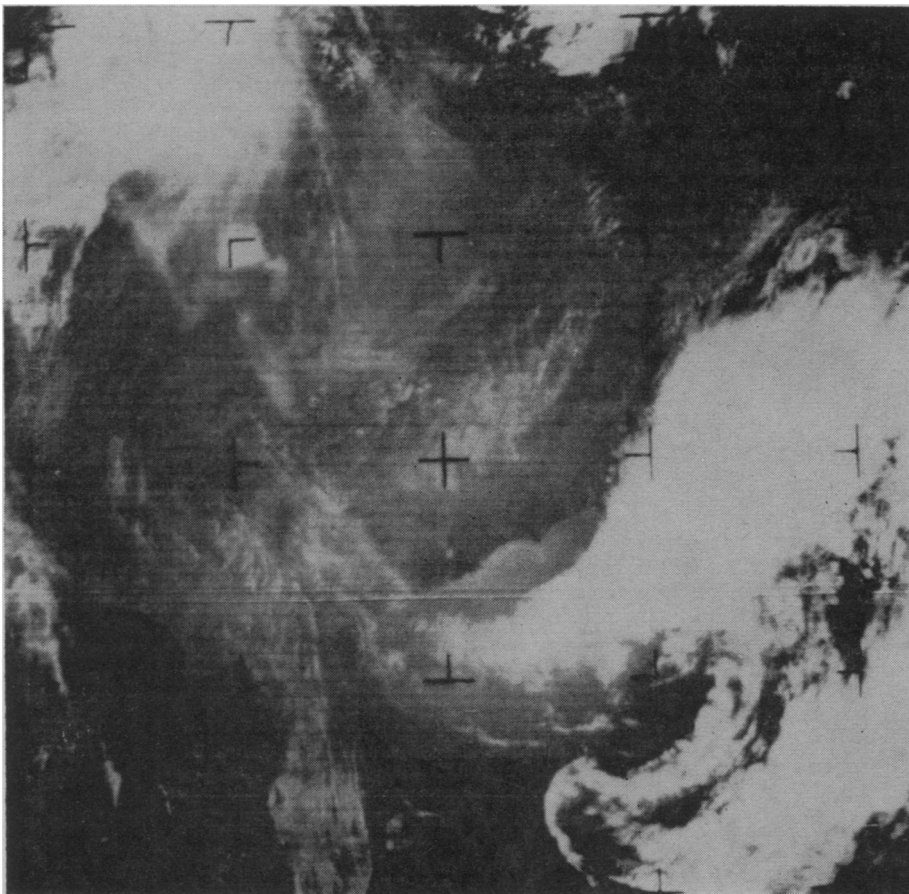
If praise is reserved only for athletic prowess or monetary success, who can blame him if he seeks these even if it means sacrificing a great potential in some other field.

Limelight for Scientists

Actually, scientists are more in the limelight today although we have yet to achieve the status of the medical profession on nighttime television. However, I believe the day is almost at hand when one of us—though certainly unrecognizable—will be replacing a Ben Casey or Dr. Kildare.

Of course television is not the only measure of a profession's prestige. Certain scientists have received the well-earned acclaim of the general public even though that public understands little of their work. One example that comes to mind is that of Albert Einstein, who once said: "Isn't it strange that I who have written only unpopular books should be such a popular fellow?"

But the glamour of today's science notwithstanding, I am most happy to extend my personal congratulations to you young men and women. It would



NASA

NIMBUS II—The Eastern Seaboard, Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and Florida Peninsula (bottom center) are shown in this photograph from Nimbus II, the newest U.S. weather satellite. The picture, covering an area of some one and a half million square miles, was taken at 12:22 p.m., May 15, about nine hours after the satellite was launched from the Pacific Coast. Developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md., the craft orbits the earth at an altitude of some 700 miles.