

D.J. De Levita (1973). De toekomst der kinderpsychiatrie. *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie*, 15, 281-288.

SUMMARY

*The future of child psychiatry.*

The achievements of psychoanalytically oriented psychiatry with respect to psychotic, brain damaged and deprived children are briefly discussed. New forms of hostility toward psychiatry are considered as a sign of the latter's growing esteem and an effort to challenge it into participation in social action, rather than isolating itself in its traditional curative attitude. It is suggested that psychiatry should resist the temptation to mix up points of view but carefully try to contribute - apart from its curative and preventive programs - to a general theory of human existence, the need for which is illustrated from a few practical points.

Th. Cohen-Matthijsen (1975). Begeleiding van de ontwikkeling bij autistiform gestoorde kinderen. *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie* 17, 681-697.

Summary op p. 751.

SUMMARY

*On the development of autistic disturbed children.*

This paper concerns the development into adolescence of autistic children. The diagnostic problems of the syndrome are not reviewed. Attention is given to possible causes and some epidemiologic aspects of the syndrome. The manifestation of the syndrome, and the youngest age of the children, when demonstrating the autistic syndrome most clearly, is discussed. Attention is given to the influence of parents and specialists on early identification of the syndrome and on the extension of the syndrome. Also is discussed the possible influence of existing brain damage on the development of autistic children, and the consequence of the autistic handicap on the development of their relations and speech, and the problems of this handicap for their upbringing and the various forms of psychotherapy.

H. van Engeland (1977). Autisme: theorieën en speculaties. *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie*, 19, 498-515.

Summary op p. 534.

SUMMARY

*Autism: theories and conjectures.*

In this paper a number of primarily cognitive theories about the genesis of the autistic syndrome is reviewed. Abnormal reactivity to sensory stimulation and rigid ritualistic behavior seem to be central symptoms in the autistic syndrome. It is argued that cognitive theories have ignored those symptoms, and so it is concluded that the cognitivistic point of view is of limited relevance in explaining autistic behavior. A psychophysiological frame of reference is proposed. From this point of view the author arrives at some hypotheses about the genesis of the autistic syndrome. Autistic children would experience great difficulties in regulating their arousal-level; some of them are over-aroused and fail to habituate on stimuli, others are under-aroused and don't respond to any stimulation at all. An exploratory psychophysiological study confirms part of the posed hypotheses.