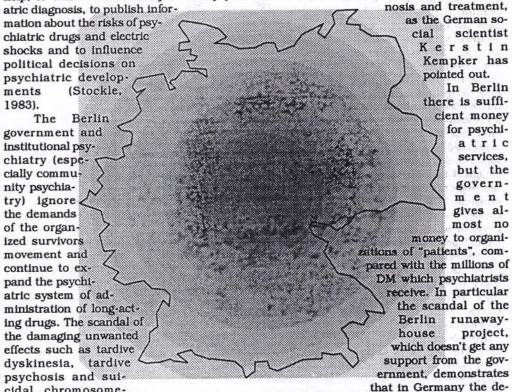
Unconventional **Approaches to Psychiatry**

By Peter Lehmann and Kerstin Kempker

help, to overcome the straitjacket of psychi- confront them with their psychiatric diag-

he interests of "users" of psychia chiatric treatment, they are subjected to the try are opposed to the interests of use of long-acting psychiatric drugs (depotpsychiatrists. Psychiatry as a neuroleptics) which continue over years, per-"contested occupation", sponsored by drug haps for a lifetime. The medical model (of companies, tries, to "help" disturbing and madness) is taught in all psychiatric and psytroublesome people even by the use of force. chological university departments, so it is logi-Berlin's patients' movement tries to or- cal that many psychiatrists cannot meet peoganize the isolated victims, to fight for human ple with emotional problems (or who make rights of psychiatrized persons, to aid self- emotional problems for others), they can only



cidal, chromosomemary glands) tumour-building effects of made great progress. For instance it took a neuroleptics has not caused the government private person in Berlin to make a DM ple outside the psychiatric institutions who tionally respected people: Peter R Breggin, being diagnosed, registered and committed Martensson, Thomas Szasz and other lawyers, chiatry. Once they become the targets of psy- ported the project publicly. However, the gov-

damaging, receptor-altering and (in the mam-velopment of psychiatry since 1945 hasn't to rethink its politics. What is more, the in- 1,000,000 gift to buy a runaway house for mates of "clinics" have no protection from the "Union for Defence from Psychiatric Viobeing forced to have electric shocks or insu- lence" (a union of so-called normal people and lin-induced coma, causing great harm. Peo- former inmates) supported by many internawant to get emotional help, run the risk of Judi Chamberlin, David Hill, Lars when they get in touch with community psy- physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists supto strangle this aid project for people who have lawyer Hubertus Rolshoven (Berlin) as a legal escaped from neuroleptic treatment (Wehde, protection against involuntary psychiatric 1991).

chiatry".

ple that have run away.

try and draws the obvious conclusion for the conceptional arranging of new runawayhouses. "The power of running away is immense" Jeffrey writes Masson, former psychoanalyst and director of the Sigmund Freud archives, in his preface to her book. "In the (former) German Democratic Republic (GDR), the first glimpse of freedom from oppression came when a few brave people actually ran away. Uta Wehde shows us it can happen in psychiatry too, and the walls of that decrepit institution can crumble

too."

sums up these alternative experiences and tastrophe. gives a voluminous survey of the literature on "alternatives to psychiatry"

Another ray of hope could be the effec- Lehmann at the Antipsychiatrieverlag, tive world-wide practice of the "Psychiatric Peschkestrasse 17, 1000 Berlin 41. Will", created by Walter Bock and Szasz and

ernment and the psychiatrists in Berlin want elaborated by the "patients" movement and treatment. People can write down, in a state The runaway-house was due to start in of undoubted normality, their wishes about September 1992; the campaign for the Psy- psychiatric treatment or non-treatment in the chiatric Will continues: its legal safeguarding event that they are later brought into psychiis one of the central tasks of the 1991- atric "clinics", called "mentally ill" and "in need launched "European Network of 'users' of Psy- of" neuroleptic or other treatment (Szasz, 1987). In the last three years, if the psychiat-People run away from psychiatric insti- ric will has been written correctly the lawyer tutions daily. They escape from treatment and the assigned persons of trust have been with psychiatric drugs and electro-shocks, active to enforce the written will of the inmate, from confinement and humiliation. In some no psychiatrist has risked violating the psybigger towns in the Netherlands so-called chiatric will. In 1990 the first leader of a large runaway-houses - comparable to battered psychiatric institution promised publicly that wives refuges - are providing asylums for peo- in his institution psychiatric wills would be accepted without any discussion. Judges ex-Berlin Psychologist Uta Wehde reports plained that they would not and could not her observations in such a Dutch runaway- impose any treatment-guardianships upon house. She discusses these observations in inmates, if these resist treatment but have a connection with other alternatives to psychia- psychiatric will written well before com-

mitment; the will of psychotic inmates, during the state of psychosis, will not be taken seriously, but where the will is clear (ie written down), it would be an offence to impose a treatmentguardianship and infer a different will" of the psychotic sub-

Nevertheless, in Berlin only organized people and people with psychiatric wills are protected. The majority of normal "patients" are without legal protection against forced psychiatric treatment; without information about

The book "The Runaway-House" deals the risks and damage of neuroleptic and other with the principal question, how to help peo- psychiatric drugs and shock methods; withple that may have problems with themselves, out real human help in situations in which the world around them and/or psychiatry. they really want social and emotional support. The author is orientated centrally towards the There is no right to drug-free help in Berlin. right to drug-free help and user-control. Her The expansion of community psychiatry, parcriterias of real human help she develops out ticularly the widening of treatment upon of statements by people who worked and lived ("nervous") children, the ("disturbed") elderly in the Utrecht runaway-house. And she re- and ("aggressive") normal and mad prisoners spects a lot of information from "users" of psy- will exacerbate the situation of psychiatry-afchiatry as well as from people running alter- flicted people more and more. The incorporanative institutions - information that is pub-tion of geno-technological methods into the lished but only in a limited way. Uta Wehde psychiatric system could be the ultimate ca-

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'People run away from psychiatric institutions daily. They escape from treatment with psychiatric drugs and electro-shocks, from confinement and humiliation. In some bigger towns in the Netherlands socalled runawayhouses - comparable to battered wives refuges are providing asulums for people that have run away."