Clinical Topics in Teaching Psychiatry
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A Guide for Clinicians

Edited by

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With sincere gratitude to Professor Peter Tyrer, my longstanding educational and professional mentor

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To Michael Carter

*Sarah Huline-Dickens*
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A Note on the Cover

Sarah Huline-Dickens and Patricia Casey

There are few well known images in medical education. This one, *Une leçon clinique à la Salpêtrière* (A clinical lesson at the Salpêtrière) by Brouillet, 1887, is supposed to show a group portrait of the famous neurologist Charcot (1825–1893) giving a demonstration of clinical signs in a female patient to postgraduate students.

Charcot has been the subject of much critique culturally and scientifically; but his teaching courses on hysteria and hypnotism were much celebrated in the 1870s, and he was an important influence on Freud at the start of his academic career. The picture captures the sense of drama of the event: students with rapt attention clearly spellbound by what they are seeing or have just seen. Maybe a few are sceptical. The light from the obscured windows softly illuminates their fascinated faces. Whatever one’s thoughts about Charcot and what he was doing to the woman at the centre of the picture - and the male gaze upon her half-covered torso - this image was perhaps intended to show the shedding of light on unexplained phenomena, the progress of scientific investigation, and that feeling of wonder which can happen when a group of learners meet to witness something extraordinary.