

Book Reviews

Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought. By ERICH FROMM. London: Jonathan Cape. 1980. Pp 147. £4.95.

It was easy to agree to review this book; I have always had a soft spot for Erich Fromm's original perspective since hearing him give his version of the Garden of Eden myth that man first became human when he learned to say 'No' to God (the Father), relating this to the stages of a child's development and individuation as a separate person. Fromm, who emigrated from Germany to the USA in the 1930s and died in 1980, was one of the Neo-Freudians who placed as much emphasis on the interpersonal dimension as on the intrapsychic. In this they could be said to be descendants of Adler who took a greater interest in the sociological dimension than Freud had done.

The book is an extended essay on the theme of the title, probably justifying the claim of the blurb that it is "inspired by great admiration for Freud's achievements but with a clear understanding of the preconceptions of his blinkered vision". While indulging Freud because every new system must necessarily be erroneous, since the creative thinker can only think in terms of his culture, Fromm is fairly severe on him for his attitude of "bourgeois materialism" and his "authoritarian-patriarchal" view of women, whom he consigned to an inferior role.

He reviews the major areas of Freud's thought, for example the Oedipus complex, transference, dream interpretation and instinct theory and considers how these have contributed or where they need revision. As Fromm's own personal statement and last book it makes interesting reading. Some of his views appear as prejudiced as he complains that some of Freud's were, for example (p. 28) that psychologically father plays no role till a child is 4 or 5. At other times he is criticizing an early view of Freud's which most psychoanalysts would now wish to revise, for example that the child's tie to his mother is more than merely sexual, or that dreams are more than wish fulfillments. Though by no means essential reading and though often pushing at doors that have already opened, this essay will not disappoint those who have enjoyed Fromm's writings before and may interest some who have not.

JONATHAN PEDDER, *Consultant Psychotherapist, Maudsley Hospital, London*

Papers on Psycho-Analysis. By HANS W. LOEWALD. London: Yale University Press. 1980. Pp 418. £15.75.

One of the themes developed by Hans Loewald in his paper on the "Therapeutic Action of Psycho-analysis" suggests that the work of a therapist is like that of a sculptor. It is an idea he has taken from Freud. In psychoanalysis, the analyst has only a rudimentary notion of what needs to be brought out, to be freed within the individual in order to establish his integrity. As may be said of the sculptor, the analyst 'creates' by releasing the core of what is in the patient by allowing for an experience and then a revelation of the distortions which trap the personality in its 'marble'. The work requires "... an objectivity and neutrality the essence of which is love and respect for the individual and individual development".

Dr Loewald's papers reflect this attitude of respect for the rough-hewn body of psychoanalytical theory. More important, he sets out to clarify, refine and elaborate its structure and in so doing makes creative discoveries. The result is a collection of papers written for psychoanalysts which span his work of more than 30 years. They reveal the attempts of a distinguished clinician and teacher to take further the conceptual heritage left by Freud. His style is elegant so his papers are a pleasure to read. Their publication as a collection recognizes Dr Loewald's contribution to developments in psychoanalytical theory.

It will be of particular benefit to students of psychoanalysis to have access to his papers in this form since Dr Loewald's interest has focussed on theoretical concepts and the psychoanalytical process. Many readers may regret the absence of clinical examples to illuminate the ideas which he presents. Nevertheless the abstract concepts he explores do not become indigestible thanks to his lucid style.

F. H. G. BALFOUR, *Senior Clinical Psychologist, Tavistock Clinic, London*

The Story of Ruth: One Woman's Haunting Psychiatric Odyssey. By MORTON SCHATZMAN. London: Duckworth. 1980. Pp 306. £6.95.

This is a long and, at times, tedious account of a disturbed lady, pseudonymously named Ruth, who