

of treatment ranged from 7 months to over 10 years; at the time of publication, 23 years after the inception of the project, four of the patients were still involved in therapy. By this time eight patients were known to have died, six from "mental illness related causes".

The author considers this to be "the most intensively studied and systematically documented large collection of psychotherapy cases extant". Each patient is reported to have a 'case study' of 50–70 pages of typing summarising history, diagnosis, treatment, and outcome, and the principal objective of the project would appear to be to examine carefully why the treatments that worked worked and why those that failed failed. It would be reasonable to conclude that this meticulous teasing out of the strategies employed in the treatment of this small, albeit heterogenous, sample of patients has contributed to an understanding of what works best with whom. This would indeed appear to be one kind of science.

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Altruism and Aggression: Biological and Social Origins.

Edited by CAROLYN ZAHN-WAXTER, MARK E. CUMMINGS and RONALD LANNOTTI. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987. 337 pp. £30.00, \$39.50.

Of the 12 chapters in this multi-author book, four deal with the "biological, sociobiological and ethological approaches to the study of altruism and aggression" and seven with the "development, socialisation, and mediators of altruism and aggression in children". The concluding chapter helpfully summarises the problems of research in these fields. The fact that this book, first published in 1987, is stated to be "the outcome of a conference held in 1982" (at Bethesda, Maryland) should not embarrass the reader, for some ten percent of the references are to publications in 1983 or later.

It might perhaps be a criticism that there is no formal or agreed definition of the two terms which form the title of this book. The meaning of 'aggression' is taken as obvious – but it is not made clear whether selfishness or competition are forms of aggression. 'Altruism' "is commonly defined as regard for, or devotion to, the interests or welfare of others"; and the term is consistently used in the sense of co-operation, helping, or sharing. But this usage is quite distinct from that of the sociobiologists, for whom altruism typically means 'self-destructive behaviour performed for the benefit of others'. The difference in meaning seems to diminish the relevance of sociobiology to the problems discussed here.

No one would deny that the aim of such studies in child psychology is a worthy one, for the greater our knowledge of the development of competitive and co-operative behaviour, the better will the forces that make

for hate or love, crime or service, war or peace, be understood. But the present book is evidence of the difficulties of such study. That most of the field work has been limited to white, middle-class American families is a minor criticism. The real problems lie in the elusive nature of the concepts and in the complexity of longitudinal studies. Thus, the expression of altruism and aggression may take different forms at different ages; the distinction between selfishness and self-interest may be hard; and the tendency of some children to internalise their emotions may make facial expression an unreliable guide to the detection of empathy.

No doubt because of such difficulties, there has been little consensus of finding. One finding is that the basic pattern of a child's aggressivity is present at an early age and tends to remain stable through childhood, especially in boys. Genetic factors are not discountenanced here; but, as one contributor observes with regard to the expression of emotion in boys and girls, sexual stereotyping probably begins at the moment of birth. The emphasis of the book is on the social causes of behaviour and on the prospects of special training to guide behaviour into acceptable channels.

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Measuring Emotions in Infants and Children (Vol. 2).

Edited by CARROLL E. IZARD and PETER B. READ. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1986. 277 pp. £27.50, \$39.50.

Many clinical decisions in child psychiatry require that a judgement be made on the emotional reactions being shown by an infant or young child. This can be a crucial issue when an opinion is being given on, for example, whether a child should remain with foster parents or return to its family of origin. However, our knowledge of the expressions of emotions by the under fives is limited, and any judgements must be cautious. This book is to be welcomed, as is any work in this field. Volume I, published in 1982, presented research completed by 1979. This book brings the field up to date. There are four sections: physiological approaches, facial and vocal expressions, mother/infant interactions, and the conceptualisations of emotion. Much of the work is methodological and is intended for future researchers, but throughout the clinician will find much of interest and importance. In the physiological field I was excited by the findings of differential right/left frontal lobe responses to positive and negative emotions in ten-month-old infants.

In the cognitive field, the ability of children as young as three to accurately differentiate and undertake a wide range of emotions is of importance. Child development research is progressing rapidly and becoming highly sophisticated. It is essential that these findings be fed