

work on the personal and emotional consequences. Their chapter suffers slightly from a failure to tabulate the mass of statistics presented, leading one to get bogged down at times in figures. A chapter on forensic psychology by Sharrock examines eye witness testimony.

The book closes with three chapters on the theme of service evaluation. Clifford & Damon explore some of the assumptions around the rush into the community, and highlight helpful cautions to those not ideologically committed. Mangen discusses the difficult area of cost-effectiveness assessment, giving some good practical advice. Finally, Brown explores the issue of consultancy in non-National Health Service settings.

As in all multi-author books some chapters are stronger than others, and I cannot claim to be competent in all the areas covered here. Nevertheless, the chapters read well, and are relatively short and concise with good and up-to-date bibliographies. I have no doubt that this will be a useful reference book for all those working in the field of mental health and disorder, and I recommend it highly.

PAUL GILBERT, (*Head of Speciality*), *Pastures Hospital, Derby*

**Babies and Their Mothers.** By D. W. WINNICOTT. London: Free Association Books. 1988. 125 pp. £6.95.

This is a collection of talks by Winnicott to a variety of professional workers, including doctors and midwives, who might be in the position of advising mothers. Here his genius is readily apparent in his capacity to convey profound and subtle insights about infancy in easily grasped and totally non-technical language. Much of Winnicott's insights stem from his understanding that "in the special context of early relationships, the behaviour of the environment is as much a part of the baby as is the behaviour of the baby's inherited drives towards integration and towards autonomy and object relating". This quote illustrates the close similarity with the more recent theorising of the American analyst, Heinz Kohut, but when Winnicott was first developing his ideas in the 1950s, this recognition of the crucial role of the environment in supporting or failing the child's development was by no means commonplace within psychoanalysis. Winnicott saw that the baby is absolutely dependent on the responses of the mothering person, and her capacity to 'hold' the baby reliably, first literally and then more metaphorically. Without reliable holding, the baby experiences the "unthinkable anxieties" of going to pieces or falling forever. Winnicott describes how the mother ordinarily prepares herself emotionally for the task of holding her baby by entering into a special state of mind he terms primary maternal preoccupation.

The first chapter concerns the "ordinary devoted mother". Winnicott describes how this famous phrase was actually the invention of a BBC producer who was

looking for a slogan to illustrate the talk. Perhaps more than any other psychoanalyst, Winnicott was able to describe normal development and to appreciate the complexities of the skills which mothers intuitively bring to their task. In a talk on "Communication between infant and mother", he argued that his concern in studying infants and mothers was not in order to be able to prescribe good mothering, suggesting that at best, "We can avoid interfering". Instead, he found that through learning from mothers and babies, "We learn about the needs of psychotic patients or patients in psychotic phases". Throughout these talks he repeatedly emphasised the dangers of intruding on a mother's or baby's natural responses and instincts. This parallels a similar theme in his writings on the psychoanalytic process where he shows a great respect for a person's spontaneous developmental strivings and the importance of the analyst's non-interference. He comments here, "All we do in a successful psychoanalysis is to unhitch developmental holdups and to release developmental processes."

This is an excellent introduction to Winnicott, especially for anyone who works with children. Here he is highly accessible, provocative and thoroughly English – a delight!

PHIL MOLLON, *District Psychologist and Adult Psychotherapist*

**Mother, Madonna, Whore, The Idealisation and Denigration of Motherhood.** By ESTELA V. WELLDON. London: Free Association Books. 1988. 179 pp. £11.95 (pb), £30.00 (hb).

This book on female perversion draws on the author's experience of more than twenty years of psychoanalytic work with individual and group patients, mainly seen at the Portman Clinic. In the first part she explores the reasons why society has hitherto failed to recognise female perversion. She argues that a man's sexuality is rooted in his penis, and is aimed externally at a part-object. A woman, on the other hand, feels and expresses her sexuality with her whole body, and in her procreative drive. When expressing hostility by perversion she may, therefore, damage her own body – or the extension of her own body, her baby's body. Motherhood gives her enormous power and control to do this. Weldon thus sees women as capable of perversion in two main ways: by damaging her own body, as in anorexia, bulimia, or self-mutilation; and by physical, sexual, or psychological child abuse.

The second part of the book deals with perverse motherhood, and the third part with prostitution. She acknowledges that we do not yet fully understand female sexuality or its perverse manifestations, and that the theories propounded in this book are only a beginning. She emphasises, however, that understanding of the psychodynamic causes is essential for treatment to be undertaken.