

approaches of traditional child psychiatric departments and private practice where individual psychoanalytical therapy and extensive family therapy predominate. The model he uses may be helpful for American mental health workers who are increasingly required by resource constraints to see large numbers of referrals of relatively psychologically healthy and motivated families. It offers relatively little to typical child mental health clinics in Britain where such families form a minority of referrals. The author admits that the system does not serve families well who are ambivalent about treatment, would not attend reliably, have multiple problems or are abusive.

In contrast to the economical form of treatment, the author's personal style is rather voluble. The meat of the book is contained in the second half which comes alive with clinical examples. He describes an active short-term therapy for children and families referred by paediatricians which draws on behaviour therapy, family dynamics and child development, and he frequently uses a consultation model with parents. He offers a few interviews in most cases, but does make direct contact with families over the telephone. Treatment for these parents whom he describes frequently 'hot-housing' their children, focuses on changing behaviour, limit setting and containing rather than expressing feelings. The aim is to "help them get on with life rather than to understand themselves perfectly". Some technical tips, particularly for adolescent problems, may be helpful to experienced general practitioners and child mental health professionals, but this type of approach should be, and already is, used only selectively in Britain because of the greater morbidity of specialist referrals.

ALYSON HALL, *Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, The London Hospital and the Emanuel Miller Centre for Families and Children*

Facing Shame: Families in Recovery. By MERIE A. FOSSUM and MARILYN J. MASON. London: W. W. Norton. 1989. 192 pp. \$9.95.

Fossum & Mason introduce their book by describing shame, an illusive and until recently largely neglected affect, as a dragon; a mythic monster. This description is valuable because it links the negative and positive powers associated with dragons to the often intangible feelings associated with shame. They say shame and dragons are both creatures with "... claws (which) can lock us in a frozen state and devour our ability to verbalise" (p. ix). Yet shame's invisibility can also provoke intense curiosity and a need to know more about oneself and one's family experience; thus possibilities of transformation or metamorphosis (a dragonish capacity) arise.

To develop their argument, the authors draw extensively from their clinical experience with individuals, couples and families. They exemplify the incapacitating nature of shame, and the processes by which it can open pathways to an individual's innermost self; this hopeful aspect no doubt arises *because* the two aspects of shame are noted, and because the authors have developed some feeling for the struggles their patients must undergo when trying to integrate the two. In addition, the authors explore the realm of family relationships where shame is illustrated as both a powerful inhibitor and a potential facilitator of genuine contact between individuals.

This is by its design a fairly wide-ranging book. However, three of the points which are made seem particularly worthwhile.

The first point relates to the origins of shame in families and the transgenerational nature which this affect possesses. That is, shame tends to be passed down the generations in families, which contributes to its illusiveness. Family systems are then inclined to sustain or 'inflict' the experience of shame in powerful and/or unconscious ways.

The second point is associated with the common tendency towards defensive cycles which maintain shame and inhibit relationships. Fossum & Mason represent these diagrammatically, which illustrates the unhelpful interplay between shame and the need to control oneself. These cycles are linked with addictive processes, and this section of the book would be of particular interest to those working with patients for whom addictions are a real problem.

The third point relates to the need for therapists to encounter their own shame in order to facilitate an openness to shame issues, and to the unconscious communications employed by patients and families in this area of experience.

This book is a worthwhile contribution, and would be of particular value to those readers who want an accessible introduction to the multifaceted aspects of shame.

PETER FULLERTON, *Analytical Psychologist, Melbourne, Australia*

Learning and Education: Psychoanalytic Perspectives. Edited by KAY FIELD, BERTRAM J. COHLER and GLORYE WOOL. Madison, USA: International Universities Press. 1990. 1016 pp. \$65.00.

This volume comes from the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis and consists of 31 papers organised into four sections, each with an introduction reviewing the literature and linking the themes of the chapters. The quality of the papers varies, and it is a book to be dipped into rather than read at one go.