

Book Reviews

The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child. Volume 32. Edited by RUTH S. EISSLER, ANNA FREUD, MARIANNE KRIS, PETER B. NEUBAUER and ALBERT J. SOLNIT. London: Yale University Press. 1977. Pp 623. £16.20.

The 32nd volume of this annual publication reaches the usual high standard of the series. Its 22 papers are grouped under familiar headings, and include Contributions to 'Psychoanalytic Theory, Clinical Contributions, Psychoanalysis in Education, and Applied Psychoanalysis'.

The title not only implies relevance to psychoanalysts and child psychiatrists, but highlights the contributions of both to the understanding of adult psychiatric disorders.

Of the many interesting papers I should like to single out especially Anna Freud's 'Fears, Anxieties and Phobic Phenomena'. This paper describes concisely the theory of phobia formation, essential to the effective treatment of both adults and children.

Kurt Eissler's paper 'Comments on Penis Envy and Orgasm in Women' interestingly draws in ideas ranging from psycho-analysis to biology and physiology. Though various groups might disagree with him, he continues a current and topical controversy, with a firm theoretical argument.

James Anthony's paper illustrates 'Non-verbal and Verbal Systems of Communication' and the difficulties and richness involved with non-verbal communications.

In the applied section, an enjoyable paper was that by Frederick Meisel, giving a psychoanalytic understanding of the well known *Myth of Peter Pan*. It reminded me of Bruno Bettelheim's recently published book—*The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (reviewed in this Journal, July 1977, 131, 101).

Though this book is probably most appreciated by those interested in a psychoanalytic model of human functioning, it is well worth inspection on a library shelf for those unfamiliar with it. Its cost would put the book beyond the reach of many individuals who would like to own it.

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Can't Your Child See? By EILEEN P. SCOTT, JAMES E. JAN and ROGER D. FREEMAN. Lancaster: MTP Press. 1978. £5.50.

Did you know that you should not hand a cup to a young blind child, you should always guide his hand to the table top where the cup is? The reason for this is simple: handing a cup carries with it the message that it came from mid air and so can be put back in mid air and thus dropped and broken.

That kind of point runs through this book. Its aim is to help parents, and incidentally many professionals, and it is a very good example of its kind. Starting with a rather sketchy chapter on diagnosis and what can go wrong with vision, it goes on to excellent sections on day to day care and finally to education. The last section, written from within a framework accepting the concept of the integration of blind children with ordinary peers, makes fascinating reading for those anticipating the Warnock Report.

Two small further comments: the style in which it is written is bland, as though the three authors had ironed out each others' idiosyncratic contributions; and really this is a book about the blind, the partially sighted receive much less attention.

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Prisons and the Prisoner: The work of the Prison Service in England and Wales. London: Home Office 1977. Pp 182. £5.25.

This well produced publication (with 28 pages of photographs) 'presents a comprehensive account of the work of penal institutions', as the Home Secretary states in the Foreword. It attempts to provide 'a balanced and not uncritical picture' to further 'informed public interest', and, within the severe restrictions imposed by having to pack such wide ranging material into so few pages, it succeeds. For those who know little of life 'inside', the glossary of technical expressions is useful, as is the description of the operational work of the Prison Service. There is 'a condensed report of what has been done recently to improve the quality of medical and psychiatric treatment . . .' though the specialist readers of this journal will feel that the report is *very* condensed.