

The Political Psyche. By ANDREW SAMUELS. London: Routledge. 1993. 380 pp. £40.00 (hb), £14.99 (pb).

Andrew Samuels has taken on an enormous task in offering a view of politics from the perspective of depth psychology. He develops some familiar themes. Many readers will be familiar with Samuels' views on the role of the father and its relation to manhood. He extends his previous work to look at the political role of men. He makes the interesting point that it is new to consider men as a separate category, since men had previously set the agenda and defined other groups by their differences from men.

There is startling honesty in the review of Jung's alleged racism and the disturbing links with Nazism. Jung was opportunistic in furthering the dominance of Jungian psychology over Freudian psychology during Nazi rule.

The book has an odd structure in that the middle section is an account of an empirical questionnaire study of 2000 therapists of various persuasions, of whom 600 replied. Samuels is passionately involved with his data, but I was left not knowing what could really be concluded from the survey, other than the important point that political and social reality needs to be seen as real, as well as an unconscious communication.

The chapter on the "object relations consensus" has the valuable effect of dismantling the "portmanteau" assumptions in mainstream object relations theory, but I felt uneasy with his argument that society is reduced to "the baby" in this discourse. The book is partial at this point, and quotes several items out of context before using them to support a contentious argument.

The highlight of this fascinating book was, for me, the account of the 'trickster' in political life. The trickster is an ambiguous figure and Samuels makes several interesting points about political culture through an examination of the trickster motif.

The book makes challenging use of depth psychology to explore themes of racism and oppression, and is a valuable contribution to a growing subject.

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When the Body Speaks. Psychological Meanings in Kinetic Clues. Edited by S. KRAMER and S. AKHTAR. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson. 1992. 200 pp. US\$30.00.

The subject of this book, non-verbal communication in the analytic setting, is important and fascinating, particularly if one has a silent patient, but perhaps even more so when words may take emphasis away from relevant and meaningful body language. The central starting point picked up by McLaughlin on p. 152 is

Freud's body-ego. He addresses bodily communications and experiences not only in the patient but also in the analyst. He argues controversially, as Sachs has documented in relation to the sign language of the deaf, that these need not remain synonymous with primary process, with regressive and primitive significance, but are an important part of overall development.

Akhtar explores the different aspects of optimal distance in a variety of relationships. Here I feel that there was a lack of the conceptualisation used in understanding the perversions such as Glasser's core complex. However, a footnote about the incest barrier on p. 34 offers a refreshing distinction between sexual transgression and subtle affirmation of attractiveness between parents and children, a welcome relaxation of the polarised positions which have resulted from the horrors of child abuse.

This is a specialist psychoanalytic book. It is a useful reference in itself for Mahler's stages of development for those not already familiar, and also offers much that the adult analyst can learn from and about child analysis.

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Journal of Law and Medicine. Edited by IAN FRECKELTON. North Ryde, Australia: The Law Book Company. 63 pp., four parts p.a. £195.00.

This new journal from Australia seeks to break down the "barriers of prejudice and misunderstanding" that exist between lawyers and doctors by exposing representatives of each to "one another's point of view". According to its editor, the journal aims to encompass "developments across the canvas of the medical-legal area". Psychiatry, of course, forms only part of this canvas, and while articles dealing with psychiatric issues form half of the first issue, papers relating to medical negligence, AIDS and confidentiality, and the withdrawal of life-support also appear. It is interesting, however, that the only contributors from the medical profession are psychiatrists, perhaps reflecting the fact that for many other medical specialities, contact with the legal system is an unsought and unpleasant event.

Although the focus is on Australian concerns and practice, these are general enough to interest non-Australian readers. As with any journal that attempts to cover a wide field, it is likely that only one or two articles per issue will be relevant to any particular reader, and the test of whether it should be regularly scanned or not will be whether such articles appear frequently enough for enough particular readers. For me, the article by Pathé & Mullen on the "Dangerousness of the DSM-III-R" meets the criterion for the first issue; their suggestion that "the DSM is no more than a distillate of the prejudices and power plays of a