

Give Sorrow Words: Working with a Dying Child. By DOROTHY JUDD. London: Free Association Books. 1989. 236 pp. £11.95 (pb), £27.50 (hb).

The first part of this book comprises a review of dying and death in childhood. The middle part is an experiential account of a Kleinian analyst's contribution to the management of a seven-year-old boy terminally ill with leukaemia, during the last three months of his life. A lot of the narrative analyses her response to his tragic predicament. The last few chapters try to make sense out of the experience from various angles.

The book is instructive for doctors because Mrs Judd arrived on the ward unprotected by the shell that is trained into junior medical staff by the carnage of house jobs. To this was added the more familiar difficulty of arriving cold on a ward to do individual work with a sick child when neither doctors, nurses nor parents seemed to understand why she was there. She gives a sensitive account of her experience. Instead of a like-minded social worker seeing his parents at the same time as her sessions with the boy, the overworked ward social worker was co-opted and did what he could. In retrospect it sounds like mission impossible. One can see a need for counselling in these circumstances but the more specific question, 'Why ask a Kleinian psychotherapist to do this work?', is even harder to answer positively after reading this book. Kleinian-based therapy may be incompatible with the day-to-day realities of an acute paediatric subspecialty ward.

This book is worth reading if you work on a ward like this, but more for the questions it raises than those it answers.

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Human Nature and Suffering. By PAUL GILBERT. London: Lawrence Erlbaum. 1989. 406 pp. \$19.95.

Gilbert explains the basis of human suffering as arising from maladaptive deviations in the expression of our individual humanness, which in turn should be understood in their historical embeddedness. He considers four sets of 'biosocial goals', care eliciting, care giving, co-operating and competing, as core schemata from which knowledge is built and the tendency for suffering arises.

One of the central ideas of this book is that much of what is regarded as psychopathology is not equivalent to medical notions of disease or illness. What we sometimes regard as pathology may represent the activation of brain states that are part of various psychobiological prepared options. Any event causing loss or excessive stress may shift the defence system by common biological routes and set up anxiety and panic. He shows clearly

that biological systems are not homeostatic and that psychological therapists who assume it is are misinformed. One of his central points is that suffering is as much *biological* as it is psychological.

The book contains 15 chapters which are well structured, progressing from general issues pertaining to sociobiology and the implication some of these have for the understanding of our evolved mental structures and capabilities to a detailed look at the 'biosocial goals'. The chapters are in pairs, the first looking at the biosocial goal and the second examining the kinds of sufferings and disorders that can relate to distortions in that goal.

In the final chapters he brings the various threads together and uses a systems analysis for the construction of 'self' based upon the activity of these various aspects within the human psyche. He makes it quite clear that he is only giving us a sketch and I feel he is underselling himself – he has indeed helped to illuminate the mind as an expression of evolution. He gives us a better understanding of behaviour regarding the concurrent evolution of sensory-motor and emotive patterns. In this respect his book makes a considerable contribution to the literature. Gilbert has produced a major work that will be of great value to both clinical psychology and psychiatry as well as allied disciplines.

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Ecobehavioural Analysis and Developmental Disabilities: The Twenty-First Century. Edited by STEPHEN R. SCHROEDER. New York: Springer-Verlag. 1990. 256 pp. £42.00.

This book, a collection of 12 chapters by 22 authors, suffers from many of the shortcomings of behaviour analysis itself. For example, those chapters that handle practical issues and settle for description are a great deal more useful and persuasive than those which attempt a theoretical approach. So, the chapters on behavioural contingencies in the classroom (Greenwood, Carta, Kamps and Arreaga-Mayer), and setting-events in facilities for the mentally handicapped (Reese & Leder, Clark, Ichinose and Naiman), are informative, while the chapters on the foundations of ecobehavioural analysis (Morris & Midgley) and on language acquisition (Kaiser) appear theoretically weak.

The chapter on language acquisition also highlights another limitation of behaviour analysis – a lack of communication with other fields of research. Kaiser's comments on joint attention, concept formation, and parental 'shaping' of infant speech, appear out of date without the appropriate references to current work in