

Book Reviews

Edited by Sidney Crown and Alan Lee

Interpreting and Holding. The Paternal and Maternal Functions of the Psychotherapist. By JEFFREY SEINFELD. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson. 1993. 314 pp. US\$40.00 (hb).

Seinfeld grasps that much of the debate over technique in psychoanalytic therapy revolves around the paternal and maternal functions of the therapist. Freud's classical position is paternal, his role as the guardian of the law and the reality principle, struggling with the patient's oedipal wish to overthrow the father. Winnicott, by contrast, represents the therapist as mother and replaces the metaphor of therapy as work with that of play, seeking to protect the patient from the overwhelming or premature impingements of reality. The paternal mode addresses psychic conflict, while the maternal mode responds to deficit. Of course, both functions are required in any analytic therapy, as Seinfeld describes in his many detailed clinical examples.

The scope of the book is wide. Many authors are discussed and compared: Abraham, Klein, Kernberg, Joseph, Balint, Fairbairn, Guntrip, Bion, Searles, Stewart, Grotstein, Sartre – to name just a few! Particular attention is given to Fairbairn (and the structure of internal object relations), Balint and Ferenczi (therapeutic and malignant regression), Winnicott (the holding relationship) and Guntrip (the regressed ego). He also draws frequently on Ken Wright's *Vision and Separation*. The focus is always on issues of technique.

Seinfeld brings the freshness and enthusiasm of an American writer linking British object relations theories to contemporary approaches in the US. The book is most worthwhile and can be unreservedly recommended to both individuals and libraries.

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A Brief Guide to Brief Therapy. By BRIAN CADE and WILLIAM HUDSON O'HANLON. London: W.W. Norton. 1993. 202 pp. £17.50 (hb).

Cade, a psychotherapist in private practice in New South Wales, Australia, and O'Hanlon, based in Omaha, Nebraska, attempt here to remedy a lack in the fast-expanding brief therapy literature. They provide a

historical overview of this approach, and what they describe as "a reasonably comprehensive tour around various aspects of the field as we currently see it".

This tour is always readable and should appeal equally to practitioners and educators since, in keeping with the ethos of its subject matter, the emphasis of the book is at least as much on practice as it is on theory. Refreshingly, Cade and O'Hanlon also examine the principles and attitudes associated with brief therapy as well as its techniques. Areas of concern which can assume particular relevance in change-oriented therapy, such as the use of covert and manipulative techniques and the place of emotions in brief treatment, each merit a chapter.

Other areas which the authors cite as of concern, such as "the implicit or explicit abuse of the therapist's position of power", might have been addressed in the section on selection and training of individuals in this field. Unfortunately, the authors only allow themselves less than two pages and so, not surprisingly, they are only able to reproduce the criteria put forward by Hanley in 1976. It would have been interesting, and perhaps informative, to have compared this with a more modern formulation, given the authors' stated aim of providing a history of the approach.

Such observations, though, should not detract from the quite remarkable achievement of compressing a great deal of information into a single, relatively short book, one which might have proved invaluable to all those who have craved an accessible overview for so long. A word of caution may be in order, though; by 'brief therapy', Cade and O'Hanlon mean the approach which derives from the tradition of family therapy and the work of Milton Erickson in the US. They draw this distinction so strictly that even the Milan Associates, who were initially much influenced by Erickson, are excluded. Those who use the term to denote the approach informed by Freud and the psychodynamic tradition and those involved in cognitive analytic therapy, the approach which has become increasingly prevalent in the NHS, are not catered for. As Cade and O'Hanlon somewhat jarringly express it in the Introduction, if your brief therapy is not theirs, now is the time to "deplane".

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