

1955

## Book Reviews

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### A DYNAMIC PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD.

*Lauretta Bender.* Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1954, xi + 275. \$7.50.

This is the third book in the Bellevue Studies of Child Psychiatry, and as the previous two, it contains a series of papers collected from among the staff members who have been studying these children at Bellevue Hospital. Only one chapter contains previously unpublished material (Chapter 7); and additionally Part I of Chapter 9. Part I of Chapter 5 has been rewritten, but for the most part there is no material which has not found publication elsewhere. An extremely wide range of material is covered: from language and comic books to reactions to war and death; from neuroses and hallucinations to Alice in Wonderland. The material is covered thoroughly and as with the previous two books, the case history technique is used. There are extensive details of each child given with commentary and explanation; and in many cases pictures of projective techniques, in an attempt to bring forth the dynamics relating to the development of each phenomenon under discussion.

Despite the fact that a clear dynamic picture of the aetiology and development of each case is presented, it is difficult to say how much this book contributes to professional knowledge on the subject of children's psychopathology which was not hitherto known. The material itself has been published elsewhere; there is no transition from one chapter to another, no writing to tie one portion of the book to the next; nor is it anything less than quite difficult to make generalizations from one or even many observed cases when there are no controlled methods in use . . . this is despite the fact that innumerable single cases are given in the book to demonstrate a point. This is simply to say that when we observe something in a child, we can relatively easily indicate the reason for such action—but whether this is a valid explanation or not is another matter. Some other explanation given at another time might seem

equally likely. From the standpoint of "likelihood" there can be no question but that the material cited seems reasonable and logical; but one cannot help but feel when finished reading the book—"but these things are obvious when anyone observes children—is there any way of saying that these things that have been read are really so?". The answer must be "No", from the manner in which the presentation has been made. There are no real "methods", controls, experimental checks and balances. At the risk of taking material out of context, all too frequently such statements are made, for example, that a girl's father had died, and then later—"Psychiatric examination revealed that she was depressed . . .". Should she not be? In short, it must be concluded that this book is fashioned for the naïve. Yet the book seems to have been designed for a more sophisticated audience, at least from the standpoint of language. There is, however, revealed a wealth of clinical data which gives many clues to watch for in dealing with children and much valuable material on children's reactions to frustrations. Finally, it might appear that this book could appear more naïve than it is actually, since it must be remembered that these articles were first published nearly twenty years ago—that is, at least some of the sections first saw light in 1936, and the remainder of them have been published in the period 1937 to 1952. It may be simply that we are now more familiar with phenomena which were not noticed or were considered quite unusual at that time.

A. STANLEY WEBSTER

Knoxville, Tenn.

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THE PSYCHIATRIC INTERVIEW. By *Harry Stack Sullivan*. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1954, Pp. xxiii, 246, \$4.50.

This is the second volume in a contemplated series of writings by the late Dr. Sullivan, edited by Helen Swick Perry and Mary Ladd Gawel. While the former, *The Interpersonal*

*Theory of Psychiatry*, deals in the words of Rollo May with "our age of unrelatedness, in which, beneath all the chatter of radio and newspapers and all the multitudes of 'contacts,' people are often strangers to each other," the second and present book speaks of specific and quite useful techniques.

The term psychiatric as used here "indicates that the interview is considered to be an interpersonal phenomenon, and that the data for its study and comprehension are to be derived from the observation of what goes on between the participants." Therefore, Dr. Sullivan's presentation in this book, as derived from papers, lectures, and notes, is practically related not only to the psychiatrist and his patient, "but to the interviewer and interviewee in a wide variety of situations." There is no fixed time limit to an interview; it may last from a single conference of sixty or ninety minutes's duration or may encompass a course of several meetings, or may be elaborated in many sessions of intensive psychotherapy.

Thus practitioners of a host of disciplines, including but not exclusive of psychiatry, will benefit from reading this book, especially if they are not "frightened away" by the term psychiatric. This reviewer found the book extremely readable, non-technical, and of definite interest to any practitioner dealing with or "interviewing" clients or patients.

HANS A. ILLING

Los Angeles

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THE SCOURGE OF THE SWASTIKA. A SHORT HISTORY OF NAZI WAR CRIMES. By *Lord Russell of Liverpool*. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1954, Pp. 259. \$4.50.

HARVEST OF HATE. THE NAZI PROGRAM FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JEWS IN EUROPE. By *Léon Poliakov*. Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1954, Pp. 338. \$3.75.

Of the Roman senator's (Cato's) orations, little has come down to us except the fanatic refrain: *Ceterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam* (by the way, I am still of the opinion that we must destroy Carthage). After a while, his persistence got him his wish. So did Julius

Streicher's persistence when he advocated the extermination of the German Jews long before the "lenient" Hitler and Himmler ever conceived the method of "elimination" to "solve the Jewish problem."

Poliakov's and Lord Russell's books present to the reader the history of the elimination of six million Jews plus another million of assorted nationals. One might question the timeliness of such publications in the light of the world's new attitude toward an alleged "new" Germany. But few could question the necessity of such publications, except perhaps the British Government which forced Lord Russell to resign from his post as Assistant Judge Advocate General because he refused to drop publication of *The Scourge of the Swastika*.

Both books contain similar, often the same, material. Both authors seem to have had the exposition and conception derived from the same or like material. But their backgrounds, stations in life and outlooks, and consequently their methods of presentation differ so much that the reader will be able to choose between the two books. Lord Russell is a jurist. His book is primarily a descriptive presentation, documented with depositions and official bulletins, although with no references attached. Being the austere jurist, the ugliness of the investigation forces him to inject adjectives now and then, such as "horrible," "inhuman," etc. His quotations from documents are relatively few, although all of them are authentic, and he feels it necessary as the jurist he is to introduce new Nazi underlings and commanders, as they appear in the book, with short sketches of their prior criminal records (which most of them had). Poliakov, on the other hand, is a social psychologist and a scientist. Besides, he is a member of the Brotherhood of Former Inmates of Concentration Camps ("K.Z.'lers"), and thus could speak from his own experience. Yet, he lets others speak, almost through the entire book. Above all: he is the super-objective historian, whose job is merely narration. Analyses and interpretations are very few and far between and, then, made mostly by others, such as the Viennese Bruno Bettelheim, himself a former inmate, or some inmates' discussion in

a camp, how Gandhi would have "behaved" under similar circumstances.

I would like to present as an example a comparison of both, Lord Russell's and Poliakov's, treatment of the same subject. Take the gassing of inmates in Auschwitz. Lord Russell describes the following scene: "The doors were locked and one or two tins of 'Cyclon B' were thrown in through specially constructed apertures in the walls. 'Cyclon B' was generally used for this purpose and contained a crude compound of prussic acid. The time it took to kill the victims varied according to the state of the weather but was seldom longer than ten minutes. Half an hour later the doors opened and the bodies were removed by the prisoners' Kommando and were buried in the pits. Before the corpses were cremated gold teeth and rings were removed . . ." (p. 168). Now Poliakov, who is quoting in full the deposition of a member of the Waffen SS, excerpted in this review:

"Yes, I saw everything and waited. My stopwatch clocked it all: 50 minutes, 70 minutes, and the Diesel still would not start! The men were waiting in the gas chambers. You could hear them weeping—as 'though in a synagogue,' said Professor Pfannenstiel, his eyes glued to the window in the wooden door. Twenty-five minutes passed. You could see through the window that many were already dead, for an electric light illuminated the interior of the room. All were dead after thirty-two minutes! Jewish workers on the other side opened the wooden doors. They had been promised their lives in return for doing this horrible work plus a small percentage of the money and the valuables collected. The men were still standing, like columns of stone, with no room to fall or to lean. Even in death you could tell the families, all holding hands. It was difficult to separate them while emptying the rooms for the next batch. The bodies were tossed out, blue wet with urine and sweat, the legs smeared with excrement and menstrual blood. Two dozen workers were busy checking mouths which they opened with iron hooks. 'Gold to the left, no gold to the right.'" (p. 195).

These being fairly typical specimens of the

two books, the reader may choose according to the strength of his nerves and the resistance of his stomach. Quoting Joseph Tenenbaum, author of *Underground* and *In Search of a Lost People*, who during his visit to Poland was sickened to further excruciating details of the life in the Nazi *Gehenna*, was told by an inmate with great bitterness: "If we could suffer all this, the least you can do is sit and listen." This reviewer's preference of the two books would go to Poliakov. Not because his book is better written, but because his depositions are selected for one purpose: to hit the reader between his eyes and on his chin with facts and figures about a crime which is unforgivable and of which Reinhold Niebuhr, who wrote the very short sendoff, says this: "I think one must read it with a contrite sense, transcending all moral issues, that it was our humanity which was capable under certain historical conditions, of sinking into inhumanity."

Above all, Poliakov attempts, and I think quite effectively, to transmit a message with his grisly presentations (according to Hermann Rauschnig, "Dante's hell seemed like a comedy in comparison. Not for nothing is Auschwitz called an extermination camp."): The Jews, six millions of them, could only be exterminated because (a) of the complacency and indifference of the so-called "democratic" countries and (b) of the Jews own *Heimatlosigkeit*; being a people without a country, they were without support. Both reasons are interrelated. Both reasons are good today, still, the state of Israel notwithstanding. Zola's "J'accuse" is repeated here in a narrative the contents of which were neither known to Zola or his generation nor to anyone or any generation that went before.

HANS A. ILLING

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CONFLICT AND THE WEB OF GROUP-AFFILIATIONS. By *Georg Simmel*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1955, 195 pp., \$3.50.

It may seem odd to "review" writings of an author, which were published more than half a century ago both in the original German and in an outdated English translation. However,

with the advances of modern psychology, psychiatry, and the "discovery" of dynamic interrelationships of groups, be they small or large, the translators of the present essays, Professors Kurt H. Wolff and Reinhard Bendix respectively, as well as the publisher did American scholars a distinct service.

Georg Simmel (along with Max Weber, Karl Mannheim, Franz Oppenheimer, and Leopold von Wiese) is one of the fathers of modern German sociology and social psychology. All of them reached the peak of their work, their teachings and writings around the turn of the last century. Simmel's *Soziologie*, as well as that of the others, did not seem to be as narrowly defined in its aim and scope as its American counterpart. German *Soziologie* encompasses a great many endeavors, which American sociology feels is not its proper avenue of competence, such as the dynamics of groups, political science, economics, etc. I suppose that German *Soziologie* is just as full of *Weltanschauung* and *Gründlichkeit*, as other sciences for which the Germans are famous.

The present volume includes two essays, which were published by Simmel originally in 1902 as a separate article as *Der Streit* (to be included as chapter 4 in *Soziologie* in 1908) and *Die Kreuzung sozialer Kreise*, republished in Munich in 1922. (The reviewer was unable to ascertain when the latter essay was published originally.) Both essays had been translated into the English before, the former, *Der Streit*, as early as 1908! So much for the history of these essays.

The reviewer will refrain from "telling all" about this modestly priced, but immensely valuable, book. What he can tell the reader may come as news. For many years and up to this date, many group psychotherapists have come to assume that Moreno's experiments with sociometric relations of actors on a stage (Stehgreiftheater) in 1912 constitute the cradle and the beginning of group psychotherapy. Bach and Illing<sup>1</sup> have discovered in

Simmel an earlier source and a broad philosophic basis for an interaction analysis, which must have stimulated Moreno. Aside from the fact that Moreno experimented clinically and successfully early in the century, it was Simmel who in the 1890's laid the foundation to a modern theory of sociometry, a theory upon which many Americans practise daily, without, perhaps, being aware of the German cradle of these ideas.

The present two essays constitute the reflection of Simmel's thinking and should, for the reasons given above, be an absolute "must" to every group psychotherapist regardless of his frame of reference. While this reviewer is not contesting Moreno's undeniable merits in being a pioneer practitioner of group therapy in this country, a revision of thinking, pertaining to the origin of ideas, should be fair and square.

HANS A. ILLING

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GRAPHOLOGIE ET PHYSIOLOGIE DE L'ÉCRITURE.

By Dr. H. Callewaert. Pub., E. Nauwelaerts, Louvain, 1954, with 53 figures and tables.

The author winds up with a negative criticism of graphology, quoting P. Janet's words of 1937: "Graphology is not yet in existence. It will be (some day) a small part in a small chapter of normal and pathopsychology." In works critical of graphology, it happens rather typically that a good deal of the refutation is directed against graphologists, many of whom are at present, to be sure, poorly trained and unfamiliar with psychology, psychiatry, neuropsychology and scientific methods in general.

Does that mean that graphological methods as such, i.e., the examination of character through motoric traces and from the motorium is impossible? The author's main argument rests with the peripheral disorders in handwriting in various neurological diseases. He does not stop once to ask himself whether the many motoric peculiarities in script could have some influence on the character and be in turn influenced by the personality. A person can change his handwriting. Where then, the author asks, could the personality come in? Again one wonders why he disdains to consult

<sup>1</sup> GEORGE R. BACH and HANS A. ILLING, *Eine historische Perspektive in der Gruppenpsychotherapie*, ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR PSYCHOSOMATISCHE MEDIZIN, 1955.

the rich literature dealing with the so-called arbitrariness in handwriting. Two cases have been discussed by serious graphologists: (a) For what purpose are such changes made? (b) What traits remain unchanged throughout the change? Psychiatrists, in particular, have shown that these are the unconscious traits. Consulting older psychiatric literature, the author would have found Lomer's picture material showing the differences between manic and depressive phases expressed in this script. Changes in the social status may find their expression in the handwriting, and here again, it is the persistence of unconscious traits that captivates the interest of scientific minded graphologists.

Dr. Callewaert is, unfortunately, not even up to date on the neurological bases. No reference is made in his book to the studies of German neurologists such as Pophal, which open up new insights about the influences of the diencephalon on handwriting.

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TRIAL OF ROLAND TRUE. Edited by *Donald Carswell*. 2nd ed.; London and Edinburgh, William Hodge and Company, Limited, 1954. Pp. 295, \$3.50.

Wary of juridical adventures, British courts still cling to outdated and medically meaningless criteria for legal insanity. That an accused may be both medically insane and yet legally responsible for his actions is a weird concept in the law of England which was originally set up under the so-called McNaughton Case of 1843. This medico-legal paradox of applying an archaic forensic standard to a concern of modern psychiatry becomes noticeably apparent in the "Trial of Ronald True" where there was uncontroverted evidence that True was insane; nevertheless, a jury adjudged him guilty.

Ronald True's crime was the murder of a prostitute on March 6, 1922 in order to gain a small sum of money and some valueless jewelry. The defense set up for True was insanity, not a sudden, maniacal frenzy of homicide, but a chronic debility that made the accused in-

capable of reasonably understanding the heinousness of crime. Incontrovertible testimony from doctors spoke of the unconscious, of repressions, of psycho-sexual developments, of infantile regressions, of emotional conflicts—concepts which have no place in a legal formula propounded half a century before the birth of modern psychiatry. A judicial rule of 1843 could scarcely have taken cognizance of the terms about which the defense was most concerned: compulsions, anxieties, phobias, paranoid trends, manic-depressive psychoses, hysterias.

The prosecution made no attempt to dispute the psychiatric evidence. To the Crown the issue was clear: True was outwardly of normal intelligence; he had committed murder; he had crudely covered up his steps to avoid detection; and although mentally unbalanced, he was righteously responsible for what he had done. The same medical facts that indicated True's mental disorder to the defense were used by the prosecution to satisfy the jury that True was a depraved fiend who had callously killed and robbed a defenseless woman; and even though he were a madman, he was a responsible agent who knew at the time the act he was committing was wrong.

The "Trial of Ronald True" demonstrates that the legal concept of mental unsoundness has been stifled by the ignorance of 1843, that insanity is more than a negative term implying lack of sanity. The law governing the criminal lunatic must be brought up-to-date with the modern psychiatric view which treats insanity as a change in the over-all emotional and instinctive activities of man, with or without intellectual derangement. We must rid our legal code of the thought which Dr. Donald Carswell has cogently expressed in his introduction, that "when a man becomes insane, he does not cease to be human."

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RE-EDUCATING THE DELINQUENT THROUGH GROUP AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION. By *S. R. Slavson*. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1954. Pp. xvi + 251. \$4.00.

Many years of professional activities in the

field of child psychology as a social worker and, later, as one of the outstanding group psychotherapists in this country, have caused Slavson to write a book directed not only at the practitioner but to the general public as well. While the book, from the first to the last page, is filled with serious and professional thoughts, ideas, and conceptions, it constitutes simultaneously an era in the author's life, in which he received a calling to assist with many and difficult problems at the Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls School in New York, operated by the Jewish Board of Guardians. It was in this capacity as director of re-educating disturbed and rebellious youth that, many years later, caused him to give an account to the general public.

According to Slavson (and well-known to his many admirers and students), "delinquency" is but a legal and moralistic concept. He feels that "there are many who commit delinquent acts who do not have delinquent character organization;" and, again, "there are persons who commit a crime who are not criminals" just as "there are persons with criminal characters who, because of favorable conditions, do not commit crimes." The author argues therefore on behalf of delinquency as a clinical concept, which is "different from its legal and moral connotations." One has to understand the distinction Slavson wishes to make in order to understand this book.

For the rest of the book: as stated above, while always serious, it is part of the author's life-story at the Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls Institution, narrated fully and without much interpretation: the reader will have to think through the rich material presented here, applicable not necessarily everywhere and at any time but, still, applicable wherever similar situations might arise. The story of the rebellious boys is certainly a universal one and the way Slavson solved it will fill the reader with as much satisfaction as it must have been to the author many years ago.

It is only in the last chapter that the author attempts to draw some conclusions, obviously directed toward the general reader. He says: "One of the important elements of a democratic re-educational community is the unitary and cooperative effort of all the adults involved . . . All the adults, no matter how lofty or how humble anyone's job—whether it be the director, school principal, teacher, psychologist, or caseworker, handyman or laundry woman, farmer or maintenance worker—all must deal with the children in a unified and consistent manner. . . . Therefore, the adults must possess a consistent and unified quality, attitude, and a sense of communal and individual values."

HANS A. ILLING

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