

## BOOK REVIEWS



### I CAN GIVE YOU ANYTHING BUT LOVE BABY

**Mothering Psychoanalysis**, Janet Sayers, Hamish Hamilton, London 1990, £15.99 (Hbk)

This book offers no more than a smattering of arguments about the scientific similarities and/or differences which exist in the theories of the four major female exponents of psychoanalysis, Helene Deutsch, Karen Horney, Anna Freud and Melanie Klein.

Scientific theories are not, as many people have pointed out, statements of irrevocable and absolute truth but should be used as a useful basis for understanding.

Comparisons between these four theorists must be considered first of all from the standpoint that all four accepted the main tenets of Freudian theory and were themselves products of the Freudian School. However, acceptance of the basic philosophy of Freud's ideas did not and indeed does not commit oneself to an overall commitment to the commonly held assumptions of this time. Freud never claimed that he knew all the answers but was well aware throughout his life of the questions.

J.A.C. Brown (*Freud and the Post Freudians*, Penguin, London, 1966) puts this very clearly:

'The ordinary man or woman **knows** that from an early age the child is interested in the mystery of birth, in its genitals and bowel motions, that we still commonly refer to 'daddy's little girl' or 'mummy's little boy' rather than the reverse, that dreams mean something (although what is another matter) that people frequently make mistakes 'on purpose', that protestations of sexual innocence or pacific propensities are mostly made by those in whom one suspects the reverse.'

The two main areas in the development of psychoanalytic theory have evolved as a result of Freud's biological assumptions. These stimulated a deeper penetration into infantile experience (as with Helene Deutsch, Anna Freud and Melanie Klein) and an opening out into the individual's social and cultural backgrounds (as with Horney). *Mothering Psychoanalysis* attempts an assessment as to how far these analytic schools have been able to provide satisfactory explanations of what we know already and to traduce from them new concepts

which were formed from this basic root concepts which, according to Janet Sayers, derive in their turn from the female/mothering/mothered experiences of the four major women psychoanalysts of our time. To these four women who are dubbed the architects of a revolution, the opening paragraph of the book waxes lyrical.

‘Psychoanalysis has been turned upside down. Once patriarchal and phallogentric it is now entirely mother-centred. Its focus has shifted from the past and individual issues concerning patriarchal power, repression, knowledge, sex and castration to the present and interpersonal issues concerning maternal care and its vicissitudes - identification, idealization and envy, deprivation and loss, love and hate, introjection and projection.

Janet Sayers argues that all four women analysts used their own mothering experience and the mothering experiences elicited from their clients as a vital component of their analytic work thereby initiating the focus on mothers and mothering which is currently in vogue. This is an interesting concept worthy of much debate and argument but the book lingers unduly on the provision of intimate details of the lives, loves and lovers of the four women.

In its attempt to ally theoretical approaches and techniques to the processes of motherhood, the book gives a detailed account of the family life and background of each individual and of the influence and behaviour of their mothers (Horney, good and Deutsch, bad). We know little of how each woman felt about being a mother (which is implied in the title of the book) and what in particular Deutsch, Horney, Freud and Klein were able to use of their day-to-day experience of being a mother in their analytic work. We learn little of whether they, like so many other women, found the stresses of a dual career to be intolerable.

Anna Freud (who was childless) is described as ‘mothering’ the children of her life long friend and companion, Dorothy Burlingham but again we learn little of the analytic insights gleaned from this experience which could in turn be offered to many who are ‘mothering’ children who are not their own.

There are brief references to Nancy Chodorow and Luce Irigaray and of an alternative ideology in which women are able to define themselves in other ways. Do women have to become a mother in order to fulfil their analytic potential? Is mothering an experience that is central in shaping women’s lives whether or not they actually give birth themselves?

We have all had the experience of being mothered and many have the experience of being a mother. The psychoanalytic interpretation of these experiences can be infinitely painful or painfully joyful. We no longer think of childhood as a time of perfect happiness and are able to accept the murderous component which lurks in every mother/child relationship. Melanie Klein in particular has heralded the theories now being propagated by Alice Miller and others. Four groups of thinkers are examined closely in this book each developing and contributing new ideas to psycho-analysis.

People of different philosophies who may have learned something from each other, but many of the differences of view have remained. This book offers no more than a smattering of arguments about scientific differences and similarities but I hope that his review will stimulate the reader to enquire further.

Cassie Cooper

**Helping the Client, A Creative Practical Guide, John Heron, Sage, 1990.**  
178pp. £8.95 pb

This is a thorough exposition of John Heron's *Six Category Intervention Analysis* which has previously been published in less depth and detail in pamphlet form. The book, or manual as it described by its author, starts by defining some basic terms and introducing the six category framework. This leads into reflections on aspects of the helping relationship which encourage the helper to review their own emotional competence and to root their intervention within concern for the client. This is followed by a chapter offering developmental frameworks for considering what the client is being helped towards. The heart of the work is a detailed consideration of each of the six intervention categories. This is done in a clear and precise manner with examples, reference to relevant theoretical concepts and discussion of some of the issues the use of each category of intervention raises. This is followed by chapters reviewing basic interventions both within and across the categories and relating the interventions to different phases of a 'helping' session. There is consideration of degenerate and perverse interventions and the book is rounded off by an outline of the use of the six category framework for training purposes.

Overall I found it very stimulating and enriching to read. The clarity of description is refreshing and there are an abundance of insights into the essence of helping interventions. At times the staccato style of presentation became a little wearisome although quite appropriate to a practical manual. I least enjoyed the chapter on Client Categories and States which I found confusing and tortuous in its attempts to make connections which appeared rather forced. I was most delighted by the chapter on Catharsis and Transmutation which offers a coherent and straightforward perspective on the relationship between affective and transpersonal modes of intervention. I also enjoyed the diverse range of examples offered to illustrate the usage of interventions at different phases of a helping session.

This book makes the six category framework available in a comprehensive form. As such it offers any 'helper' an illuminating perspective from which to reflect upon their work and it makes an effective practice developing tool accessible for use in training and supervision.

Steve Page

**The Practical Guide to Personality Types: Understanding the Enneagram, Don R.Riso. Thorsons, 1991, £7.99**

The Enneagram has been adapted from the Sufi tradition and Gurdjieff to assess personality by, firstly, Oscar Ichazo, and secondly, in its current form, by Claudio Naranjo of the Arica Institute. The Enneagram is used in transpersonal psychology in America as a way to understand traditional psychopathology within a broader context, to enable us to free ourselves from our compulsions and neuroses.

There are nine types of personality in the Enneagram, and everyone falls into one of these types. Don Riso names these types: Type 1 - The Reformer, Type 2 - The Helper, Type 3 - The Status Seeker, Type 4 - The Artist, Type 5 - The Thinker, Type 6 - The Loyalist, Type 7 - The Generalist, Type 8 - The Leader, and Type 9 - The Peacemaker. There is a questionnaire in the book to help you identify your type. Once this is discovered, the book outlines ways in which to work to integrate and develop this knowledge about yourself.

I have read various books on the Enneagram and have used this system of personality assessment in my work for six years and have found it to be a useful tool, not only for my own personal growth but also to help clients to move on too. What I particularly like about this book is that it has a whole chapter outlining misidentifications, and clarifies some of the confusions that people may have in identifying their type by comparing and contrasting different types.

Sandie Ritter

**Update on anti-sexist work with boys and young men, Janie Whyld, Dave Pickersgill and David Jackson. Whyld Publishing Co-Op, 1990, 100pp, £5.00 slide bound**

This is a collection of articles and materials used in anti-sexist work with boys and young men. It includes work in schools (from the age of six upwards), colleges and youth work. It starts off with some interesting history about Equal Opportunities legislation and the like. There are descriptions of good practice, in this country and Holland, session plans and materials, some theoretical justification (in which racism is acknowledged and not ignored) and an extensive list of resources (including videos and computer games) and contacts.

I liked the experimental approach - much has been taken from the humanistic tradition in this area. I particularly liked the piece on some work on Dennis the Menace in the Beano. And there is a lot of honesty in this book about the difficulties in working with boys who may be quite resistant to the ideas being introduced here.

The same publishers bring out quite a series of these things, and this makes a good introduction to them.

John Rowan