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**Carr, A. (1996). Book review of H. Conte and R. Plutchick (1995). Ego Defences: Theory and Measurement. Chichester: Wiley. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, No 97, 45-46.**

# JOURNAL OF CHILD CENTRED PRACTICE

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practical experience which tells us that this is simply not the case. If we could all reflect on our own experience, particularly on our own adolescence, we would be very aware that we were quite insightful by the age of thirteen or fourteen, but that we were discouraged from sharing that.

*Interviewer:* Thank you.

## Book Review

by Alan Carr

University College Dublin

Boyne, E. (1993) *Psychotherapy in Ireland*. Dublin.  
The Columbia Press. 295pp. IR£9.99  
ISBN 1-85607-079-4

Up until now there has been no consumer's guide to psychotherapy in Ireland. Nor has there been a psychotherapy textbook with a uniquely Irish orientation. Edward Boyne's new volume, therefore, is an important book for both prospective psychotherapy clients and students of psychotherapy. This latter group may include members of a variety of disciplines and professions including child care, psychology, psychiatry, counselling, social work, nursing, youth work, pastoral care and so forth. In short, the subject matter of Boyne's book appeals to a wide audience.

My guess is that most readers will be satisfied with what they find between the covers of the 300 page text. The editor, quite successfully, required each author to write their chapters using a flexible framework that included headings on:

1. The historical background.
2. The philosophy of the person.
3. The way that the approach comprehends human problems.
4. The process of change.
5. The application of the approach in practice.
6. Training and
7. Selected Reading.

The eleven chapters span the main approaches to psychotherapy practiced in this country in the psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive-behavioural and family therapy traditions. The authors of each chapter are recognised national experts in their particular branch of therapy. The majority have been trained abroad, before returning to Ireland to adapt their chosen approach to our unique Celtic culture.

Within the psychoanalytic tradition, Ross Skelton's chapter focuses on adults and Michael Fitzgeralds on working with children. Rita McCarthy's and Patricia Skar's describe Jungian analysis. Patrick Nolan presents an approach which integrates bodywork with psychoanalytic psychotherapy. These chapters, as expositions of psychoanalytic work, are unusual for two reasons. First they are clearly written and second they are virtually jargon free.

Chapters that fall broadly speaking within the humanistic tradition include those by Rachael Graham on Person-centred therapy; Vincent Humphrey's paper on Gestalt therapy; Michael O'Regan's presentation of Psychosynthesis and a paper on holotropic breathwork by Una Maguire. This diverse quartet of papers from the humanistic tradition show how North American West Coast psychotherapy can find a home on the East Coast of Ireland.

The single chapter on cognitive behavioural therapy is written by Tony Bates. Tony has written this chapter to show how the art of psychotherapy (in this case cognitive therapy) and the science of psychology (notably social learning theory) may be integrated coherently. It is the most academically robust paper in the collection.

From the family therapy tradition there are chapters by Ed McHale and one by Dorothy Gunne and Bernadette O'Sullivan on constructivism. Both offer the newcomer a guide to this intriguing field. I was disappointed that both papers did not contain more on the application of systemic therapy to marital and sexual difficulties and the process of mediation (Gurnam & Kniskern, 1991).

Overall, the book is not without its shortcomings. Firstly, authors were not required to present evidence for the effectiveness of their branch of therapy. This has led to an unbalanced presentation. Tony Bates, for example, went to considerable lengths to marshal the empirical evidence on the efficiency of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy in the treatment of depression in a very convincing way. None of the other authors offered more than a sentence or two on the issues of effectiveness despite the availability of such evidence (Garfield & Bergin, 1986) and the importance of such data for the establishment of the credibility of psychotherapy for consumers and health insurance companies. Secondly, the way in which psychotherapy may be combined with other treatment modalities including pharmacotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and the way it may be incorporated into child protection procedures were not addressed. There are exceptions. For example, Michael Fitzgerald emphasised the importance of combining child psychoanalytical psychotherapy

with supportive work with the child's parents to achieve lasting therapeutic gains. Thirdly, the dangers of psychotherapy and the steps taken by professionals psychotherapists to guard against these are not mentioned by the authors. In particular, no author mentioned that 10% of clients deteriorate as a result of psychotherapy (Garfield & Bergin, 1986); that a substantial minority of clients are abused by therapists and that all psychotherapists of merit are members of professional regulating bodies, whose code of ethics guide their practice.

Despite its limitations, Psychotherapy in Ireland, is an excellent book and in years to come will be recognised as a significant milestone in the development of psychotherapy as a profession in this country.

## REFERENCES

- Garfield, S. & Bergin, A. (1986). *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behaviour Change* (2nd Ed.) New York: Wiley.
- Gurman, A. & Koniskern, D. (1991) *Handbook of Family Therapy*. Vol 1. New York: Brunner Mazel.