

illness, are badly written, confused, and confusing—not, in my opinion, worth reading. A professor of comparative literature probably should not try to expound psychiatric or psychoanalytic theory.

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**Survivors, Victims, and Perpetrators: Essays on the Nazi Holocaust**, edited by Joel E. Dimsdale, M.D. Washington, D.C., Hemisphere Publishing Corp., 1980, 456 pp., \$19.50.

Up to a decade ago, most of the literature concerning the Holocaust consisted of reports of survivors, documents of exceptional value for portraying the highest examples of human heroism as well as of human depravity. In their motivation to serve as witnesses of the greatest bureaucratically engineered massacre in the history of civilization, the survivors understandably presented the events in a personal way.

In the last few years, a new view of the Holocaust—more scientific and historical—has emerged, notably in the United States. The President's Commission on the Holocaust, the television series "Holocaust," and the many courses on the Holocaust offered in various departments of a number of colleges are an expression of this new trend. It may be that more than three decades are necessary for approaching a matter which tends to arouse so many unpleasant feelings in the great majority of men: guilt for the senseless massacre, anger and frustration for the debasement of the human race, and, at a deeper level, concern for the potential of aggressiveness and destruction that lies in the inner core of every human being.

This last factor may, in particular, account for the resistance in dealing with this dehumanizing event. Indeed, as the distinguished Yale psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton put it at the conclusion of his essay in this volume, "The professions have a dismal record in relation to holocaust. More often than not they have lent themselves to a denial of its brutalizing effects" (p. 124).

As indicated in its subtitle, the book is, in fact, a collection of essays, most quite long, by a number of psychologists and psychiatrists in addition to a few historians and sociologists. The editor, Joel Dimsdale, is a Harvard psychiatrist who has done research in the area of coping behavior under conditions of stress. Other authors, too, have previously contributed to various aspects of the subject of holocaust; their chapters are marked for their mature and serious presentation.

Perhaps the reader should start with the chapter by the French scholar Patrick Girard on the "Historical Foundations of Anti-Semitism," an enlightening and comprehensive view of a complex subject condensed in 20 pages. Three main points emerge: 1) the contrast between anti-Semitism viewed strictly as Judaism versus anti-Semitism viewed in relation to Christianity, 2) the tendency at different times in history to consider the Jews as infidels (and to accept them if they converted) or, rather, as belonging to a different race, and 3) the paramount role of anti-Semitism in nineteenth-century France in influencing German public opinion. Not so lucid is the chapter on "Weimar Intellectuals and the Rise of National Socialism," which, although not too well integrated, covers many interesting points.

In his chapter, Raul Hilberg—the only political scientist in the group—offers a clear presentation of the various aspects of the repression of the persecution of the Jews (such as denial and use of metaphoric expressions to cover up the genocide), the rationalization to justify the massacre (the Jews as inferior race, the "Jewish conspiracy," and so forth), and the rationalization on the part of the perpetrators (they were carrying out orders and they were all involved in the same deal). It is followed by a sociopsychological analysis of the victims (mainly their almost complete lack of resistance and their tendency to comply to avoid harsher measures by the Nazis).

The main bulk of the volume, dedicated to the victim, opens with an excellent, albeit succinct, chapter on "The Concept of the Survivor" by Lifton, who views the Holocaust in the context of three other ominous episodes of mass human destruction: Hiroshima, Viet Nam, and the flood caused by the rupture of the Buffalo Creek dam. Common to all of these are five psychological themes: 1) death imprint, with its related death anxiety, 2) death guilt or survivor guilt, 3) psychic numbing or the diminished capacity to feel, 4) suspicion of counterfeit nurturance (i.e., resentment toward help, which is perceived as a sign of weakness), and 5) struggle for meaning (i.e., the goal to survive to bear witness). Yet, in spite of the common aspects, Lifton stresses that "to observe common psychological responses of survivors, however, in no way suggests that the historical events themselves can be equated."

This is followed by a chapter on "The Concentration Camp Syndrome and Its Late Sequelae," by L. Eitinger, a psychiatrist from Oslo. This chapter contains some interesting data concerning Norwegian camp survivors, focusing on the so-called "persecution syndrome": anxiety, chronic depression, insomnia (usually due to nightmares), inability to forget, voluntary social isolation, and an array of psychosomatic symptoms. After a chapter on coping behavior from the dynamic perspective by Dimsdale, considerable space is dedicated to the influence on the children of the concentration camp survivors, a complex dynamic characterized by expectation to suffer like their parents, lack of nurturance because of the distortion of the parents' capacity for human relations, unrealistic parental expectations that their children would give meaning to their empty lives, the survivors' deficiencies in parental skills and their fear of aggression, problems regarding the children's self-image and sense of Jewish identity, and, finally, Bettelheim's controversial theory that many of the survivors' children raised in a peer-group-oriented system (kibbutz) show certain behavioral and developmental shortcomings. A chapter titled "Stress and Coping Under Extreme Conditions" uses the behavioral model of transactions between troubled persons and the environment. The final chapter in this section, "Social Behavior of Concentration Camp Prisoners: Continuities and Discontinuities with Pre- and Post-Camp Life," analyzes the social behavior of the camp inmates and survivors, showing the presence in the latter of more or less severe psychological impairment.

Of the three excerpts from books that open the third section of the volume, those from the autobiographies of Rudolf Hoess, the camp commandant of Auschwitz, and Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda, are most notable for their shallowness and banality. This banality, typical of the Nazi bureaucracy, constitutes the theme of the third excerpt from *Eichmann in Jerusalem* by the prominent

political philosopher Hannah Arendt. This thesis has remained very controversial, yet some support has been offered by the experiments by Milgran and Zimbardo, reported in the next chapter. Milgran asked subjects to give electric shocks of increasing strength to individuals for some alleged research purposes. In Zimbardo's study a simulated prison experience was created with normal subjects playing the part of guards and prisoners. In both cases "normal" individuals showed considerable potential for sadism and for insensitivity to another individual's discomfort.

A detailed analysis of the interpretation by researchers of 16 Rorschach records obtained from Nuremberg war criminals in 1946 is offered in the following chapter. The last chapter, by John Steiner, a sociologist in California who was an inmate of several concentration camps, presents the results of a sociopsychological inquiry into the SS of yesterday and of today. He describes their turning from a soul-searching group into a powerful and frightening force, their psychology in their role of perpetrators of the Holocaust, and their relatively good personal and social adjustment in today's Federal Republic of Germany. This is a well-informed, scholarly chapter supported by a rich bibliography.

My overall impression of this volume is that of a high-level scientific endeavor on a theme which tends to elicit, and justifiably so, emotional reactions and moral judgments. This is, in itself, no small accomplishment. Also, the editor has done his best to group the various chapters dealing with widely scattered themes under three sections of the book, *The Setting, The Victim, and The Perpetrator*, by preparing a separate introduction to each one.

In the way of criticism, one would certainly expect a presentation of current ideas about the psychology of victims put forward by Bettelheim (probably the best known psychologist dealing with this matter), especially in view of the criticism made of such ideas by some of the contributors. It would also have given depth to the subject of the persecution of innocent people if some reference had been made to recent literature on the sociopsychological mechanism of the emergence of the scapegoat. Among the minor criticisms is the differences in format of the references given at the end of each chapter and the incompleteness of the references to foreign books in some of the chapters.

Regardless of anyone's orientation and philosophy of life, the Holocaust remains the greatest and saddest tragedy of our Western civilization. Aside from its historical significance for Judaism, it clearly documents the core of perversity that is harbored in many who are apparently "normal." It is refreshing to observe that psychology has now come of age to face the horrors of the Holocaust. At the same time, however, it is sad to have to admit that the roots of such horror lie in the core of the human psyche and that each generation never seems to learn from the errors of the previous ones.

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**Anthropological Structures of Madness in Black Africa**, by I. Sow; translated by Joyce Diamanti. New York, N.Y., International Universities Press, 1980, 248 pp., \$17.50.

"Modern medical services are almost never called upon, at least in traditional circles, until African remedies have

been exhausted or proven ineffective" (p. 12). This and similar cogent observations indicate that Sow has spent time in both African villages and African psychiatric settings. He clearly understands the cultural context of psychiatric care-seeking in tribal settings. In addition to enjoying Sow's social insights, clinicians working with traditional African patients will appreciate the detailed review of the work of both anthropological and psychiatric investigators—almost exclusively from the French literature. The absence of many relevant African studies published in English is a reminder of linguistic obstacles even in this age of satellite television and computerized literature searches.

The author takes a strongly psychoanalytic approach of a kind seldom encountered today. While eschewing psychiatric nosology, he raises our hopes that elucidation of "deep and latent psychic content" will lead us to understand human behavior. According to Sow, this comprehension must and can occur only within the context of specific cultures. At the same time that he champions the "emic" or iso-cultural approach, he accurately notes numerous pan-African themes that unite African nosology, healing, cosmology, and myth—the latter itself an "etic" or cross-cultural approach. Apparently comparisons can be done within, but must not extend beyond, Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although he is sensitive to African perspectives and themes, Sow's intellectual processes reflect European tradition. In Aristotelian fashion he would see anthropological theory, personality theory, and psychiatric theory thoroughly integrated with each other—even though what is plainly "sense" in one field can be "nonsense" in another field, given differences in sampling, data collection, and theoretical biases. Sow also skillfully employs the Hegelian dialectical locution: "'Conflict' is the raw material of social cohesion."

Translated from the French, the work often reads ponderously. Phrases within phrases, dramatic hyperbole, and 60–80-word sentences must be breached. It is an effort best hefted by the psychiatrist with special cultural or African interests.

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**Transformations: The Anthropology of Children's Play**, edited by Helen B. Schwartzman. New York, N.Y., Plenum Press, 1978, 398 pp., \$29.50.

This book is simply superb. It is illuminating, fascinating, and delightful; reading it is sheer pleasure. After all, what else should a book on play be? It is also clear, erudite, comprehensive, and a first-rate work. As Schwartzman points out, play can be work, as in games, and yet work in some cultures can be playful. This book is both. Throughout, Schwartzman maintains the dual perspective of the playing child on the one hand and the playing anthropologist who creates theories to understand the child on the other.

Why should a book on play be of interest to therapists? First, both involve the ability to suspend and yet retain a certain sense of reality. One's therapist is, after all, not one's father, and yet one may feel in many similar ways about him as one did toward one's father. If one cannot see that they are two different people, therapy will be difficult because one is deluded, and if one cannot let oneself experience the