

## BOOK REVIEWS

### ADLER THE INNOVATOR

ALFRED ADLER. *The Science of Living* (1929). Edited with an introduction by Heinz L. Ansbacher. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1969. Pp. xxii + 138. \$1.25 paper.

For more than a decade I have been recommending the original edition of this book to my students as a good introduction to the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler. Its availability now in this inexpensive paper edition will, I believe, open it to a larger reading public and make Adler's point of view more widely read and more clearly understood. Although my review is explicitly of this book, I discovered long ago that none of Adler's books—not those which I myself have read, at any rate—can stand alone. Each is necessary for a better understanding of the others, for each deviates from or modifies earlier development of Adler's basic ideas.

The essence of this lucid and useful book is that every normal human being interacts with other human beings by means of an innate potentiality, but not inborn motive, which Adler originally called *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*. The translation of this controversial word is "social interest." What saves this word from mere social adjustment and conformity to the standards of the group is that in its later extended meaning it makes room for the nonconforming innovator, the independent spirit who contributes to the enhancement of the individual and society. Social interest means an interest in mankind and an interest in the interests of mankind. It carries the important idea of goal-orientation, and this orientation implies a future temporal dimension. This stress on the future placed Adler in fact in the center of the existentialist movement at a time when this movement was just coming to maturity in Europe, especially as this movement was developing in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Adler is thus again seen to be an innovator and not a follower.

Moreover, in the framework of Adler's central ideas the concepts of social interest and social adjustment, terms which were current in the psychologies dating roughly from 1920 to the end of World War II, far transcend the mechanistic character of those psychologies and are consistent with the dynamic nature of Adler's life and writings. These writings including the present volume, abound in such bold ideas as the uniqueness of the individual, betterment of the human situation, reformism as social reconstruction, changing a person's conception of his life, anticipation of the future, etc. I like to think of my own proactive psychology, with its emphasis on the forward-thrusting nature of man, as being essentially Adlerian.

In the light of the above considerations we come to see afresh the viability and up-to-the-minute relevance of Individual Psychology. We come to appreciate a fact not often remembered, that despite the occasional use of the terminology of adjustment psychology, Adler was a holistic, phenomenological, and human-centered psychologist at least twenty years before this view became known in its American version.

When social interest grows, it gives rise to those mature forms of conduct which occupy the central place in Individual Psychology and the emerging humanistic psychologies. I am speaking of human concern, othermindedness, compassion, and the loving encounter. These human phenomena are best explained by a psychology of social interest. They require that we emancipate our minds, as Adler liberated his own, from the consequences of a rigid homeostasis and drive-reduction psychology, which is possible only in a social interest conceptual framework.

The foregoing comments give added credence to my earlier statement that *The Science of Living*, though serving as an introduction to Adler's writings, presupposes both earlier and subsequent developments of his ideas, notably, his views of the philosophy of science, his rather loose "methodology," his general social philosophy, his view of education, especially that psychology is education, etc.

Upon this background I have found more focused meaning, clarity, and a renewed appreciation of such leading ideas as the education of children, love and marriage, the social sentiment, style of life as both individual guide and personal philosophy, and above all, a better reconciliation of inconsistencies as a form of unity-in-diversity. And for the understanding of the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, this is reward enough.

More appropriate chapter headings and the introduction of corresponding center headings enhance the reading quality of the new edition. The new book is also provided with an index.

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#### CORRELATES OF SELF-ESTEEM

STANLEY COOPERSMITH. *The Antecedents of Self-Esteem*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1967. Pp. ix + 283. \$6.00.

This is a highly important and at the same time fascinating book. Without doubt, it will be a major influence on the course of developmental research for the next several years, and, if certain of its more striking findings are supported by further research, it may well presage a drastic shift in certain child-raising practices in our culture. Essentially a research report, the volume also includes a limited, introductory discussion of the historical background of the concept of self-esteem, and a somewhat more extensive examination of the theoretical implications of the findings.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the book is simply that it exists—i.e., that the topic of self-esteem, which has been a major psychological concept since William James, and was discussed long before that, has now been approached through objective, quantifiable means. This work, to be sure, is not the first empirical study of self-esteem—a major prior one is that of Rosenberg (*Society and the adolescent self-image*, 1965)—but it is the most intensive such study, and because of its important theoretical and methodological innovations, it is likely to have far-reaching implications. It therefore deserves our very careful examination.

Coopersmith defines self-esteem as "the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy" (pp. 4-5). This statement, be it noted, is a *trait* rather than a *state* definition; i.e., it focuses upon self-esteem as a relatively enduring characteristic of a person, rather than upon implications and correlates of day-to-day variations in self-esteem. Both of these definitional approaches appear to be significant for personality research, but the trait dimension, which Coopersmith has employed, is probably more appropriate for individual differences studies.

The concept of self-esteem, as Coopersmith indicates, is a fundamental aspect of the broader concept of *the self*, and the present work is best seen as a contribution in this larger context. The importance of the construct of the self in psychology is indicated by the fact that it has been employed, under one term or another, in all important personality theories since at least the time of Adler. Adler was also one of the first to give systematic attention to the subdimension of self-esteem as a personality variable.

The essential features of Coopersmith's study are as follows: The subjects were 85 white boys, 10-12 years of age, attending public schools in Connecticut. They were selected from a larger group of 125 in such a way as to represent a considerable range on the dimension of self-esteem. Two criteria were used in this ordering: (a) a 50-item (sample: I'm pretty sure of myself) self-report inventory (SEI); and (b) a 13-item (sample: Does this child attempt to dominate or bully other children?) behavior rating form (BRF) filled out by the teacher. The 85 final subjects represented five groups of 17 each, including one group obtaining high scores on both the SEI and BRF, one group being low on both, and so on. Each subject was then administered a series of tests, including the WISC and Rorschach. In addition, several experimental measures, including level of aspiration, tendency toward conformity, and reactivity to stress, were obtained. Finally, three techniques were used to gather data concerning the antecedents of self-esteem: (a) an 80-item questionnaire (sample: A wise parent will teach a child early just who is boss) which was completed by the mothers of the subjects; (b) an interview with the mother; and (c) a number of questions on parental attitudes answered by the subjects.

The focus of the present book is upon the relations between the first and second of the above classes of variables—i.e. upon the relations between the subjects' level of self-esteem (primarily as assessed by the self-report questionnaire) and antecedent conditions (primarily as assessed by the mothers or the subjects themselves). In other words, the study is primarily concerned with the conditions that lead to high self-esteem.

Before considering the overall results of the study, several comments of a methodological nature are in order. The design of the study is essentially straightforward, and relatively convincing; nevertheless, there are certain limitations which need to be taken into account in its interpretation. Most of these limitations probably reflect an inadequacy in reporting, rather than any basic defect. For example, though the author reports and discusses a large number of specific statistical tests—largely chi-squares and F values—at no place are the results of all

possible significance tests systematically presented. The reader is thus unable to evaluate the number of statistically significant findings that were obtained in terms of the number of opportunities for such values. Several detailed tables in the appendix, reporting these kinds of data, including correlations among the various relevant variables, would have been extremely helpful.

Another limitation in reporting concerns the sample. Its nature in terms of basic demographic data is only very sketchily presented, so that the reader has difficulty in knowing how widely he can reasonably generalize from the results.

The study also has several limitations of a more intrinsic kind. Many of the findings represent relations between questionnaire-type data, in many instances as obtained from the same individuals, so that response sets may play a biasing role. Most of the relevant data reflect self-reports, rather than observations of behavior: while not inappropriate, this methodological approach is always fraught with a certain tentativeness. The findings are further restricted in that interview data were not obtained from the fathers, but only from the mothers of the subjects. In addition, there is the inevitable limitation in generalizations due to the nature of the subjects—in this instance all white, male, middle class “normal” American boys.

These various criticisms and limitations are by no means trifling, but they are hardly devastating, either, and if they give the findings of the study a certain tentativeness this is not unexpected for a pioneering piece of work. On the whole, the design is straightforward, reasonably comprehensive, and commendably objective.

Let us turn, then, to some of the study's more interesting findings. I can offer here only a sampling of the project's extremely varied results. A number of data concern the characteristics of families of boys having high esteem. As might be expected, mothers of high-esteem boys tend themselves to have high esteem; high-esteem boys, as compared to low-esteem boys, appear to have closer relationships with their fathers; and there is less tension between parents of high than between parents of low esteem children. In the families with high-esteem boys the decision-making process appears to be somewhat different than in other families in that the tendency was “for *either* the father or mother to make major decisions and less tendency for them to share equally in the decision-making process” (p. 113). Self-esteem of children was not significantly related to family size, but there was a tendency for first-born and only children to have higher self-esteem.

What about infant feeding practices? Psychoanalytic theory has suggested that breast feeding enhances the child's feeling of security. In the present sample, however, there was no consistent relation between type of feeding in infancy and level of self-esteem in the preadolescent years. How about early trauma? The data provide no support for the supposition that the incidence of serious traumatic occurrences had been greater in the low than in the high self-esteem boys. On the other hand, a significantly greater number of low than of high esteem children had manifested behavior problems in childhood.

This sampling of results gives some idea of the nature and range of the questions studied. I will mention just one more finding, this one somewhat surprising and nicely illustrative of the fact that professional shibboleths are not always supported by research. The question can be asked: Are the parents of high esteem

boys more, or less, permissive than the parents of low esteem boys? The data of this study indicate that they are *less* permissive. Coopersmith suggests that this result, which is contrary to much current theory, may in part be due to the possibilities that parental rules help children to establish clearer definitions of reality, and that they symbolize parental attention. In any event, this finding is one that calls for further research.

The present book is not devoted solely to empirical findings. In his discussion of parent-child relationships Coopersmith sets forth a new theory of childhood dependency behavior. The essence of his proposal is that dependency behaviors have the function of providing the individual with information relative to his worth; they are, in other words, information-seeking behaviors determined by the need for a clear and stable self-evaluation. This is a highly innovative and challenging conception, and clearly merits additional study.

To sum up: This is a valuable, innovative and highly readable book. It is important not only for what it contributes in its own right, but also because of the important questions that it raises, and because of the influence that it will have in helping to stimulate further research in the important area of self-esteem.

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#### NEW MENTAL HEALTH CONCEPTS

EMORY L. COWEN, ELMER A. GARDNER, & MELVIN ZAX (Eds.) *Emergent Approaches to Mental Health Problems*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967. Pp. xiv + 474. \$9.00.

The mental health problems of our society are increasing in complexity to the point where new approaches must be sought to fill the growing needs for services. Probably one of the most concentrated efforts to bring various authorities together to study and address themselves to community mental health problems was the conference on "Emergent Approaches to Mental Health Problems," sponsored jointly by the departments of psychiatry and psychology at the University of Rochester, June 17-19, 1965, which provided the basis and the title for this book. The editors were joined by 25 contributors, including George W. Albee, currently president, American Psychological Association, Jules D. Holzberg, Frank Riesman, Margaret J. Rioch, and Charles D. Spielbeeger to name a few.

The book presents a historical review of beliefs and practices in the mental health fields and then addresses itself to conceptualizations concerning present status of psychiatry, psychology and manpower needs. The biggest part describes new ideas in developing manpower and new approaches used already in schools and universities for the purpose of prevention of mental health problems.

Despite the rapid movement in the field and the many innovations which have been attempted since 1965, this volume has such substantial quality that one will find it today still full of inspiring concepts. Many ideas proposed by various authors will take another decade for their experimentation and realization. This book should be especially stimulating to readers of this *Journal* because some of the new approaches for prevention, especially the attempts to involve mental health awareness in schools, are not foreign to many Adlerians (cf. Dreikurs, Dinkmeyer, Sonstegard, etc.). The book is well written and the editors deserve

special recognition for making it "hang together" in spite of the many authors involved.

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### THE CURRENT TIDE

LESLIE PHILLIPS. *Human Adaptation and its Failure*. New York: Academic Press, 1968. Pp. xiii + 271. \$10.50.

This book is another strong confirmation of the Adlerian position, although no mention is made of Adler, only of some of his important terms such as goals, values, concern with the future, success and failure, life-style, sexual role, etc. An essential difference from Adler is that the author is a great deal more deterministic and there is no discussion of creativity. "Early experiences mold the self concept and behavior of adults" (p. 173).

The author, a psychologist formerly of Clark University and Worcester State Hospital, and now at Boston College, describes his position as "interactionist." He summarizes this in an amazingly "Adlerian" statement from which we shall quote. "All forms of pathological reaction within a community share a common origin in that they reflect a failure in constructive adaptation." Consequently, there is a common core of therapeutic effort which is "directed at the development of social competence," whether the effort is concerned with delinquency, neurosis or psychosis, or psychosomatic reactions. "Correspondingly, there is a tendency to de-emphasize the role of unconscious and irrational factors. . . . The attempt is to encourage participation in constructive, fulfilling, and emotionally satisfying real-life experiences . . . closer personal relationships and increased participation in the life of the community . . . Personal difficulties are typically interpersonal in both their origins and consequences, and . . . their solution lies in joint action and mutual trust" (pp. 216-217).

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### EFFORTS AGAINST VIOLENCE AND ITS EFFECTS

BLAIR JUSTICE. *Violence in the City*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1969. Pp. xiii + 289. \$7.75.

"To those who are convinced that the conditions that breed violence can be overcome without violence," reads the dedication of this timely book. It has been written from the experiences of an unusual psychologist about an atypical American condition. The author, Dr. Blair Justice, is a social psychologist at Rice University, a prize winning newspaperman for over 15 years (whose feature "The Human Side of Science" still appears in a Houston newspaper), an assistant to the mayor of Houston on human relations, and a man with considerable active social interest.

This book is not an effort by an arm-chair philosopher to warp unfamiliar data into simplistic and biased theoretical molds (as, for example, the recent labeling of student activists as diseased castrates). Dr. Justice was involved in his "natural dialogue" interviewing, conducted by peers (Negro interview teams) in

shared language and communication styles, even before the Watts trouble, and has continued this method with different samples of the poor (mainly Blacks) to measure the effects of violence.

Open hostility has its causes, according to Justice, in what he calls the "seed" factors of unrest: the Spotlight placed on violence by the media, the Expectations and Attitudes of ghetto dwellers, and the Distribution of people, their mobility and density in the ghetto (p. 14). But it is with the effects of violence, usually ignored by other writers, that Justice is most concerned. Using incidents in Houston as examples, Justice traces through the natural-dialogue interviews the spread of distrust and hatred within the city and within the individual's cognitive structure.

His social concern is upon the short- and long-term approaches to abrogate violence. The Houston police-community program (this *Journal*, 1969, 25, 38-47) was one of Dr. Justice's progressive ideas. One's identity is the ultimate motivational concept. The chapters on prisoners, police, militants, and students show that Justice is able to appreciate both the individual differences within these groups and how these differences are maintained by one's search for identity. Case histories, field studies, and Houston's efforts to facilitate the growth of co-operative and hopeful identities for the disadvantaged are the backbone of the book.

Adlerians will be especially interested in the case history of Jim Norris, a semi-literate Black prisoner under a life sentence who decided to "stop reacting" and become his own man. From "Adler, James and Sartre" (p. 95) he gathered hope and encouragement, and even to his death he refused to react violently to the provocations of others. Austin L. Porterfield in his foreword contrasts Jim Norris with the Black Power revolutionary who "tries to gain superiority on what Adler would call the 'useless side,' gaining 'power over' instead of 'power with' the majority" (p. ix).

The book is valuable as a documentation of efforts by socially and humanistically committed individuals to overcome the hopelessness and inertia of disadvantaged and bureaucratic alike.

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### A BIBLICAL IMAGE OF MAN

ABRAHAM L. HESCHEL. *Who is Man?* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1965. Pp. vii + 119. \$1.65 paper.

Abraham Heschel is both scholar and activist. He is the author of many works concerning the predicament of modern man as well as others dealing more specifically with problems in Jewish theology. In recent years he has also been heavily engaged in the civil rights and peace movements.

*Who is Man?* reminds us of the necessity to gaze beyond the narrow confines of our own disciplines if we are to maintain a meaningful perspective in our daily work. The title implies a protest against the increasing tendency of viewing man in mechanistic terms—as a product of causes, and the attempt is made to offer the biblical image of man as an alternative.

We ask: *What is man?* Yet the true question should be: *Who is man?* As a thing man is explicable; as a person he is both a mystery and a surprise. As a thing he is finite; as a person he is inexhaustible (p. 28). Nature is made up of processes—organic life, for example, may be described as consisting of the processes of birth, growth, maturity, and decay; [human] history consists primarily of events. . . . Being human is not a solid structure or a string of predictable facts, but an incalculable series of moments and acts. As a process man may be *described biologically*; as an event he can only be *understood creatively, dramatically* . . . the make-up of human existence: the power to create an event. Deficiency of such power is a deadly sickness (pp. 43-44, italics ours).

From the very outset Heschel insists that man is never to be found in a natural state.

Human nature in its pristine, uncorrupted state is not given to us. Man as we encounter him is already stamped by an image, an artifact. Human being in distinction from all other beings is endowed with consciousness of its own being, not only with awareness of the presence of other beings. Consciousness-of implies awareness of one's special position in relation to other beings. Any conception as to what I am going to do with myself presupposes my having an image of myself (pp. 7-8).

For Heschel human conduct in general is based on man's own interpretation of himself and his world—a striking similarity with Adler. It would appear that Heschel and Adler agree that human conduct is never automatic, mechanical or accidental but consistent with premises and positions—on man's assessment of himself within a particular situation. Heschel in particular emphasizes that: "The essence of being human is value, value involved in human being" (p. 12).

Thus the principle problem for man is not his nature but rather what he is to do with it. In other terms the "ought" precedes the "is"—purpose, meaning and creativity become the essential for human action; man's instinctual make-up, the inessential. Heschel takes pains to convey the concept of "transcendent meaning." "Man's vocation is not acceptance of being, but relating it to meaning; and his unique problem is not how to come into being, but how to come into meaning" (p. 67).

Heschel's biblical image of man emphasizes that choice, responsibility, value and decision are essential to man's task of being human. The outcome of these is meaning. Meaning is inherent in the human condition—it can either be sought or betrayed. Man is inevitably challenged—life does not leave him alone. He may choose to respond or refuse to do so.

Man relates to others, according to Heschel, in two fundamental ways, through manipulation or through appreciation (p. 82). Manipulation is embodied in what Adler would call the neurotic's life style, characterized by tactics of coercion and strategies designed to eliminate effort and risk. Translated into existential terms this would be the attempt to convert "being to expediency." By contrast, the concept of appreciation is linked to one of openness to the awe, mystery, and wonder of each moment of existence.

Heschel's image of man is thus far basically consistent with the predominantly humanistic psychology of Adler. There is, however, a principle difference between the theistic approach of Heschel and Adler's secular psychology. According to Adler the problem of man is basically resolved by his "social interest"—contributing to the society of man, with regard to a better future society, *sub*

*specie aeternitatis*. This is Adler's transcendent meaning. According to Heschel the difficult stance of "appreciation" (not so difficult in view of the miseries of neurosis) may only be sustained if man remains aware of a transcendent "commandment of being." For man to sustain himself as such he would have to consider more than social interest; he would have to realize, "The loss of sense of significant being is due to the loss of the commandment of being. Being is obedience, a response. 'Thou art' precedes 'I am.' I am because I am called upon to be" (p. 98).

In pondering more deeply Heschel's masterly work, the mental health worker may very well be struck with the realization that its concepts and notions surprisingly may help us in defining not only the elusive meaning of psychotherapy, but also the often confusing relationship between psychiatry and religion. It would seem that the therapist has principally to do with the individual who desires recognition and acclaim, yet is unwilling clearly to take the risk and responsibility of assuming the position of "I am." Therapy may well offer an individual the possibility of converting from a position of "I am not" to one of "I am." The task of religion would be to superimpose upon the concept of "I am" one of obedience and command. Put otherwise, therapy at best may reach "satisfaction and utilization"; religion points man to "celebration and awe."

To conclude, I would submit that we have the alternatives of choosing to translate the psychiatric problem into the positivistic medical and paramedical concepts, or into the essentially politico-ethical problems of existence. The truth is elusive. That being so, Heschel's work is crucial for those inclined towards making the latter choice. It is surprisingly compatible with Adler's humanism.

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### INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY IN POETRY

ROSS ALLEN McCLELLAND. *The Errant Dawn*. [Homestead, Fla.: Olivant Press,] 1969. Pp. 40. \$5.00.

This is a first book of poems by a practicing clinical psychologist and Adlerian. He received his Master's degree at Sacramento State College, where later he was assistant professor of psychology, and studied at the University of Oregon. He is also a writer.

The author considers the book Adlerian throughout; and one of the larger poems in particular "summarizes the democratic and humanistic philosophy underlying Individual Psychology." Entitled "The Man of Imperfections," it ends with the protagonist speaking of the dignity of man and the courage of one's own imperfections. "Then God stepped down from His throne, And the throne dissolved forever, As side by side they walked with easy grace, He and the Man of Imperfections." The poem is inscribed "To Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D."

Of the title poem, "The Errant Dawn," the author writes that "it treats of the arbitrary nature of categories, the relative nature of truth, and the selective nature of perception."

While charming the ear, and touched with humor, McClelland's lines challenge the soul. For instance, they bid one not to miss "The great Concordant Orchestra That unifies All themes"; to realize that "self-fulfillment is not a thing

one finds alone." He encourages the reader "to come on in. The water's . . . deep and troubled, But it's warm . . . the primal stuff." It is difficult to single out one poem, yet we should like to give the reader one, as a sample of McClelland's work. We have chosen the one called "Fantasy," which happens to be the last one in the book.

The old man wraps his years  
Around him as a cloak  
Against a world grown cold  
And warms himself within  
By memories and dreams,  
As he sits  
To await  
His completion.

And he muses,

"When my elements  
Have been returned  
To the great primordial pool  
Of perpetual regeneration,  
Perhaps some part may go  
to make the forebrain  
Of a poet.  
Perhaps . . .  
Perhaps . . .  
Amen."

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ROWENA R. ANSBACHER

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## BOOK NOTES

ARD, B. N., JR. (Ed.) *Counseling and psychotherapy: classics on theories and issues*. Palo Alto, Cal.: Sci. & Behav. Books, 1966. Pp. xiii + 310. \$5.95 vinyl.—An extremely valuable collection of basic approaches, most from 1955 to 1962. Ard has succeeded in his purpose of choosing provocative opposing views and bringing them into sharp contrast, to facilitate the reader's weighing them critically. Ellis (interestingly with the most pages), Rogers, Maslow, Thorne, Glasser, and Mowrer are among the authors. Even without a psychoanalytic representation there is enough difference to challenge old practitioners, let alone new students. A unique feature is the worthwhile inclusion of papers on philosophical and ethical implications—also highly controversial.

AUERBACH, ALINE B. *Parents learn through discussion: principles and practices of parent group education*. New York: Wiley, 1968. Pp. xii + 358. \$7.95.—The author, "in cooperation with Child Study Association of America" has written a most helpful book, comprehensive and detailed, authoritative on the basis of her wide experience and knowledge of the literature. Mrs. Auerbach's approach is academic, and she is writing for trained leaders; but her understanding is so valid and clearly expressed that this work would be an invaluable sourcebook for lay leaders as well. They will find suggested specific answers to just about any problem situation, in addition to excellently formulated general guide lines. Mrs. Auerbach herself defines "professional" as not "whether we are being paid . . . or have a professional background, . . . but in the sense that we take our job seriously, and approach it with high standards" (p. 164).