Book Reviews

CHILDREN IN DANGER: COPING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF COMMUNITY VIOLENCE. James Garbarino, Nancy Dubrow, Kathleen Kostelny, & Carole Pardo. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992, 262 pp. (234 pages of text), $28.95.

The text, *Children in Danger: Coping with the Consequences of Community Violence*, successfully synthesizes a vast literature with clinical material imparting a sense of hope on a topic that usually results in despair. The authors state that the book is intended for those inner city teachers, social workers, psychologists and community workers who want to better understand the children in the urban war zone. I contend that the text has a broader audience: social work students, faculty, practitioners and policy makers would benefit from reading this monumental and compelling text. The reader is forced to examine the plight of young children who live in the urban war zones. Garbarino and his coauthors clearly and unerringly present a mandate as to how the needs of these children can be better met. This reviewer concurs with the authors that the proposed interventions are neither inordinately expensive nor esoteric. As one who has worked for several years with children in desperate situations and been frustrated by the inadequacy of resources and lack of community support, this book gave me a sense of hope that I have long been seeking.

The text is extremely well researched and organized. The bibliography alone is a rich resource for those concerned about children in trouble. The summary of the literature is counterbalanced with sufficient clinical material to consistently engage the reader. This text of 234 pages is subdivided into eleven chapters. The first half of the book is more academic whereas the second is more clinical. The clinically oriented individual is advised to read through the first half rather than jumping to the second as the authors set a thorough stage in the first half for their discussion of realistic interventions. The text begins with a discussion of the meaning of danger for children in general and then compares children in the urban war zones with those from countries at war. The risk factors and coping strate-

gies of children in the urban war zones are reviewed. The inevitable consequence for many children in the urban war zone is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The authors identify schools, particularly preschools, as possible sites for intervention and provide case vignettes. Means of structuring the schools, methods to help the teachers and staff, and insight with respect to the child's world of play are provided as components of the intervention. The result is a sense that amelioration, at least to some extent, is possible for these troubled children.

In the first chapter, the authors identify the conditions needed to foster growth in children. Almost every child experiences some sort of hardship in his/her life. However, when the balance between the positives and risk factors begins to tilt toward the negative, the prospects for unimpaired growth are jeopardized and the burden for the child increases. Children are more susceptible than adults. Garbarino and his coauthors indicate that trauma for children less than twelve years of age is three times worse than it is for others. The child and his/her own internal resources, the stage in development, the supportiveness of the environment all contribute to the equation. Garbarino refers to this as an ecological perspective on human development, a frame that is quite consistent with that of social work and the bio-psycho-social perspective.

In the next chapter, the authors compare children from actual war zones in Mozambique, Cambodia, Israel and Palestine to those in the metaphoric Chicago "war zone." The similarities are many. However, there is also one major difference: the wars are based on religious and/or political differences providing a tangible and recognizable reason for the strife which helps the children make sense of the situation. Furthermore, society often provides these children with a mode of response. In Cambodia, the children learn that "the truest revenge lies in living well, taking care, honoring the memory of those who have been lost" (p. 35). In the United States, the urban war zones are due to the racial discrimination that pervades this society, hardly a moral imperative for violence. With discrimination, self-esteem is diminished and a sense of shame and negative identity may result. Society provides the child in the urban war zone with neither a means of understanding, nor a mode of responding.

The authors then identify factors that might ameliorate or exacerbate the impact of events in the zone on children. Included are the environment or community, the family, characteristics of the individual child such as age and developmental level, a number of risk fac-

tors, and the relationship between the parent(s) and the child. If the balance of these factors is negative, then the child may develop PTSD. Two additional factors exacerbate the plight of these already vulnerable children. First, the supposed enemy is frequently a friend or family member. How does one reconcile this apparent contradiction? Second, the violence that the children observe is deemed wrong by society, yet this same society casts a blind eye in their direction.

Despite the incongruities and risk factors, Garbarino and coworkers contend that children can cope if given the right conditions. Just as risk factors are multi-level, so are factors related to resilience and coping. Of particular interest to the authors is the potentially ameliorative role that schools can have for these children, the focus of the second half of the book. The authors begin this second half with a discussion of schools and in so doing, express both their pragmatism and hopefulness. The authors capitalize on their ten years of experience with day care and Head Start programs, the foci of their interventions. With humility, they note that preschools are not the only vector for amelioration, but that with which they are most familiar. There is nothing unique about the programs they discuss, none are demonstration projects with inordinate amounts of funding that would be difficult for other communities to replicate. However, the authors caution that each child is unique, meaning there is no one way to intervene. Their goal, instead, is to provide a set of principles to guide the interventions with various children.

A vignette of one four-year-old, Ramon, whose life story is tragic, but not unusual, is presented. He has witnessed too much violence and exhibits agitated play. Fortunately for him, his day care has a developmental curriculum, consistent and relatively small subgroupings which are lead by one teacher who is trained in early childhood education, a flexible parent program which includes the parents to the extent that they are willing, and staffings to help the staff make sense of the children's lives and to help the staff process their own understandably strong reactions to what the children tell them and their own fears for themselves and their families. The major components of intervention are the attachment relationship, the structured and controlled environment, and the developmentally oriented classroom environment. Since the overall goal is to help improve the child's coping skills and self-esteem, tasks are modulated to meet the child's needs. If somewhat regressed, the expectations of the child are lowered to a realistic level. When Ramon feels aggressive at the end of a difficult day, the teachers calmly take him aside and help him

focus on a task that is manageable for him at that time, thus renewing his self-esteem.

If the teachers are to function well at their tasks, they too must be supported. They need education about child development theory and practice, an understanding of developmental consequences of risk and the associated probability of regression, PTSD, children's understanding of death, protective factors and resilience, mental health skills, and emotional availability and the role of affect in the helping relationships. Understandably, dealing sensitively with the children's reactions to violence is difficult for the staff as many live in the same neighborhoods as these children and have had their own experiences with violence. Furthermore, children may tell the instructor about conditions at home necessitating a report to the Department of Social Services, forcing the staff into an onerous position. The staff person is cautioned, though, that time is generally required to gain a child's trust. One particularly effective tool that the authors discuss is the medium of play. Although disconcertingly graphic at times, the world of play is crucial for children allowing them to escape while simultaneously controlling their environment.

In the final chapter, Garbarino and colleagues summarize the text under four major themes: children's resilience; the challenge to adult care givers of providing such care to the children; the importance of alternative concepts of revenge for children; and ideology as a motivator. The first addresses the fact that the risk factors in the child's environment should be offset by the positive aspects of the neighborhood. Such a positive balance would help the children and the adults who work with them. Secondly, when adults function better, they are better able to help children. The third notion involves helping children think about morality, a challenge in their environments where anomie generally prevails. The fourth notion suggests a counter to the debilitating force of shame.

At the end of the text, Garbarino and colleagues present a challenge to all with the statement, "Neighborhood mobilization and psychologically oriented schooling must be the foundation for our nation's response to children in danger" (p. 234). It is here that I take Garbarino and his colleagues to task. This statement begs the question as to why such reasonable interventions are not occurring. I wanted the authors to get angry with the system, to lambaste it for allowing such malignant neglect. However, had the authors dwelled on this, the grace and beauty of the book would have been lost. Other than this point, there is little to criticize in this book. It is a rational, lucid, and

unfortunately candid portrayal of the life of young children in the urban war zones. Perhaps that is the problem. Like the teachers who work with these children, we do not want to watch while they play funeral, we do not want to know the extent to which the country is not meeting its implicit promises to these children. Garbarino and colleagues force a realistic examination of the plight of these children, and fortunately, they also provide us with a sense of hope as they do so.

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FROM FATHER'S PROPERTY TO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: THE HISTORY OF CHILD CUSTODY IN THE UNITED STATES. Mary Ann Mason. Columbia University Press. 1994. 237 pages.

The issue of children's rights continues to be of enormous interest at this time in our country. The trend toward increasing rights for children has been challenged from all quarters as either the cause of the breakdown of the family when children are allowed to "divorce" their parents, or as standing in the way of efforts to preserve the family by placing the child's needs above those of the family.

Mary Ann Mason has added to this debate by producing a fine piece of historical research that traces the development of children's rights from colonial America to current times. This book is rich in facts, figures, and concrete examples taken from contemporary court cases to illustrate major points. Her major premise, that increasing rights for children is related to increasing rights for women and to a mother's ability to provide economic support, is very timely in today's debates about the value of orphanages, welfare reform (particularly aid to unmarried mothers), and father's rights. She provides an excellent background for a sound understanding of principles underlying state intrusion into custody matters and substitute care practices. In addition she develops a comprehensive review of the evolution of the "best interest" standard which continues to be a matter of disagreement in high profile custody cases, such as that of "Baby Richard" in Illinois in 1995.

One of the major strengths of this work is the inclusion of minority children in the consideration of children's rights. Too often, texts ignore the status of the slave and Native American children in looking at the history of this issue. The author does not make that mistake, and the book is enhanced.

The picture painted of life for colonial children in America is far from rosy. The author reports that about half of all emigres to colonial America were indentured servants, and by 1800, approximately 20% of all children in the colonies were slaves. Mason debunks the common perception that children in colonial America were merely property or chattel to be bought and sold. While she acknowledges that indeed, slave children could be sold, Mason makes the important distinction that for non-slave children, it was their labor that was owned by their fathers and masters, not their person. The "economic needs of the colonies determined the custodial arrangements of children" (p.46).

Mothers clearly did not have custody rights equal to fathers, who had almost unlimited control of their children (Orphan was defined as a child whose father had died). A number of sentimentalized views of colonial families are challenged by the author, including the amount of time mothers spent with their children (limited), the nature of their emotional relationship (tepid), and the extent of a mother's moral influence (minimal).

Fathers, however, did not enjoy the rights to their child's labors without some responsibility. These responsibilities included supporting children economically, preparing them to participate in the economy by teaching them a skill (or apprenticing them out to learn such a skill), and maintaining some legal relationship to their mother. These are all ideas that are currently advocated in various sectors of the political landscape.

The right of fathers to their children's labors, the role of wedlock and the responsibility to educate was completely reversed for slave families. Slave children were owned by their mother's masters in a "complete repudiation of the father" (p.43). Legal marriage and education were denied slaves. Those who wish to deny the effects of the past on current policy should take note here.

Mason charts the growth of the more "romantic, emotional view of children" as one step below angels, and she relates it directly to the equally sentimental view of mothers as angelic nurturers themselves. Women derived increased status through the deification of motherhood, a useful concept that kept women at home and out of the workforce as America began to move to out-of-home industry in the 19th

century. She postulates a unique idea that this idolization of motherhood was tied to middle class culture which developed from ideas of family promulgated in mass circulation magazines and books.

These forces affected judges as well, who began to use the "best interest" standard to take into account the child's "tender years," gender, the relative wealth of the disputing parties, and parental fitness in custody decisions. While the best interest standard favored maternal custody of children in most cases, it was in conflict with the agenda of women who saw child custody as a part of the struggle for married women's property rights (particularly inheritance rights). Legislators favored a "best interest" standard as well, believing that if women were given equal custody rights they would have a greater incentive to leave their husbands and break up families.

The situation for children of former slaves was complicated by the laws against slave marriage which disinherited them by virtue of their illegitimacy. When these marriages were recognized as legitimate after the Civil War, it was primarily for purposes of inheritance, not for purposes of child custody.

During the Progressive era 1890–1920, the foundation for state intrusion was laid. Courts became increasingly involved in decisions about how children should be raised in order to "protect" them, setting minimum standards for child raising. Social workers came to dominate the debate, arguing more often for maintaining a child in the home rather than removal for economic circumstances alone. The child-saving movement encouraged the development of financial aid to mothers as a tool in maintaining poor children in their families, i.e. with their mothers.

Mason's discussion of the debate and development of Mother's Aid in the early 20th century is as fresh as today's newspaper. Considerations of a mother's sexual morality in order to receive public aid and campaigns to criminalize nonsupport by fathers are ideas with great currency in today's highly politicized environment. The status of single motherhood was cause enough for suspicion of fitness as a parent and ultimate removal of children from her sole custody. This all begins to sound disturbingly familiar.

These issues fueled the debate about child neglect, one of the most troubling conundrums of the early 1900s. Poverty was rejected as the sole grounds for removal of children, and yet it was inescapable that poor children suffered the effects of what was defined as neglect or *parental incompetence*. Parents were incompetent in providing economically for their children.

The current shift of the issue of child custody and children's rights to the divorce courts and social service agencies is a reflection of the high divorce rate, the lower rate of marriage among mothers of all ages, and the more fluid definitions of child abuse and neglect in use. The role of economic resources in shaping custody decisions for children continues to be a major factor, unlikely to abate in the more current, politically correct conception of poverty as individual moral failure.

This book provides a solid background for those who wish to understand the current social policy debates about some of the most compelling contemporary issues affecting children and families. Its richness goes beyond a narrow consideration of the "best interest" standard and places children's rights in historical and contemporary context, giving life to current ideas about poverty, welfare reform and women's economic status. This would be a welcome addition to any social worker's library.

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INSIDE OUT AND OUTSIDE IN: PSYCHODYNAMIC CLINICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE IN CONTEMPORARY MULTICULTURAL CONTEXTS. Joan Berzoff, Laura Melano Flanagan, and Patricia Hertz. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, Inc. 451 pages.

Inside Out and Outside In represents a collaborative effort (in all there are 7 contributors to 16 chapters in this edition) to present the full array of psychodynamic theories that inform and elucidate clinical practice. The authors at the outset are careful to distinguish psychodynamic from psychoanalytic theory stating that the former view on development is far more inclusive in its scope. Because the text strives to include in virtually every chapter the somatic-biological and cultural contexts of the biopsychosocial surround, they achieve their stated objective of focusing on both the "inside out" as well as the "outside in" vantage points for assessing the person-environment configuration.

The text is organized in two major sections. The first half elucidates the core concepts of seven psychodynamic theories: traditional drive psychology, structural theory, ego psychology, psychosocial theory, object relations theory, self psychology, and interpersonal theory. A

chapter is devoted to the central constructs of each theory as it pertains to personality development. Each chapter provides a scholarly critique of the important assumptions, biases, and limitations of the particular theory thereby affording the reader a basis for evaluating the theory as well as for comparing it to the other theories for similarity and fit or dissonance. Finally, the authors attempt to ground each theory in its historical context, providing the reader with further insight into the social forces and cultural circumstances that played a role in shaping the theory's final form and outcome.

This section of the text ends with two excellent chapters, one on the impact of race and culture as they color development (by Lourdes Mattei) and another on psychodynamic theory and the psychology of women (by Joan Berzoff). These two chapters alone make this work an outstanding contribution to social work practice—the former because it provides an up to date, critical analysis of the pathologizing effects of some aspects of traditional developmental theory as they fail to explain the complexity of racial identity and the latter because of its postmodern theoretical sophistication.

As the authors highlight the core concepts of each theory—e.g. mental topography, tripartite structure, transmuting internalization, self object functions, dynamisms, transitional space and the holding environment, and the rapprochement crisis—they endeavor to provide clear explanations of these complex postulates and succeed in elaborating them through rich case vignettes from their practice experience. They achieve a further synthesis of theory relative to practice by occasionally leaving behind the world of the clinician to explore the characterizations of novelists and poets: the transcendent, mythic creations of T. S. Elliot, A. A. Milne, and James Joyce all receive the authors' theory-rich scrutiny.

The last section of this fine text is devoted to psychopathology. The intent in this section is to go far beyond the mere categorization and description of symptom clusters, the superficial approach utilized by so many other current texts on the market that remain at the DSM IV level of diagnostic formulation. Instead, the authors elaborate the etiological basis of the major disorders—schizophrenia, anxiety, depression, and personality disorders—infusing their discussions with the points of view afforded by the psychodynamic theories presented in the first section of the text. These chapters are replete with current research—biological, constitutional, and genetic considerations are accorded their place as determinants in the outcome of mental disturbance. In short, the biopsychosocial context of mental illness receives

the authors' full attention and makes this section an excellent study guide for the recently graduated practitioner with an eye to licensure examinations.

Inside Out and Outside In presents an indepth psychodynamic review of developmental and personality theory. Its strength inheres in its breadth of scope which includes the context of culture, race, and ethnicity as well as research findings from the sciences. This work is scholarly and well written and attends to postmodern theory in a rapidly expanding clinical social work universe. Therefore, its utility at the level of graduate MSW education, especially in curriculum areas of human growth, behavior, and the social environment seems obvious. In this latter regard, it will compete successfully with other texts whose focus is less expansive and wherein the terminologies are more dilute. It will likely prevail due to the authors' balanced approach to the full biopsychosocial surround of present day clinical theory and practice.

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