

BOOK REVIEWS/COMTES RENDUS

List of Reviews:

- JAMES A. FOSTER
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
- NORMAN W. GARLIE
St. John's, Newfoundland
- BARBARA L. GOODE
Beaconsfield, Quebec
- KENNETH S. MEEN
Edmonton, Alberta
- E.E. FOX
Edmonton, Alberta
- B.D. WILBUR
Halifax, Nova Scotia
- GRACE M. WONG
Victoria, B.C.

Fromm, E. *Greatness and limitations of Freud's thought*. New York: Harper and Row, 1980.

Reviewed by:

James A. Foster
Faculty of Education
Acadia University
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

Erich Fromm's contributions to the world of psychology and beyond are already well known. Indeed, apart perhaps from those authors who have confused psychology with a kind of prescription for the pursuit of happiness, it is doubtful that any contemporary figure has reached more people on a subject so dear to so many — human behavior. Consider, for a moment, how Fromm has enriched our vocabulary with such terms as "marketing personality," "authoritarian conscience employees" (ACES), or "biophile" and "necrophile". And what counsellor would judge his or her reading list complete without Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*, *The Sane Society*, *The Art of Loving*, *The Heart of Man*, or *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*?

Now Fromm has given us another book, *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*. Sadly, it was to be his last. Fromm died in March 1980 in Switzerland at the age of 80.

If the book symbolized nothing else than the end of a most productive life it would be quite enough. It is, though, much more than this because, ironically, it is also a critical examination of

Fromm's academic roots or more precisely a return to the concepts of a man who certainly influenced Fromm's early career.

Yet while Fromm parted company with Freud on many issues, there is nothing shrill in this critique, no sense of unfinished business or academic one-upmanship. The book is just what the title suggests and Fromm makes it abundantly clear, as Newton noticed, that extended vision is always easier when you are standing on the shoulders of a giant. So, for example, when Fromm reminds us of some rather dubious conclusions Freud arrived at in the Wolf Man case, he carefully acknowledges Freud's "capacity to observe and take into account the smallest detail" in a way unknown to Freud's disciples.

Against a background of authoritarian patriarchal society in which Freud lived and a Zeitgeist that favored "bourgeois materialism" as Fromm called it, Fromm examines Freud's thinking on such topics as the unconscious, the Oedipal complex, transference, and narcissism. In each case he finds Freud's position wanting simply because, in the final analysis, Freud proved only too human and could not completely leave behind the conventional wisdom of his day. His attitudes toward women which could scarcely be called admirable, as most feminists know all too well, had little to do with scientific inquiry and much to do with Freud's experience with women who were expected by middle class standards to be "sexually cool" and inanimate love objects.

As always, Fromm has written in a style of such ease and simplicity that even the most profound

passages are amazingly readable. This is a fine book which should be of interest to any counsellor regardless of his or her theoretical penchant. It certainly augments what would already have been a prodigious legacy.

Jacobson, N.S., & Margolin, G. *Marital therapy: Strategies based on social learning and behavior exchange principles*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1979.

Reviewed by:

Norman W. Garlie
Department of Educational Psychology
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland

For those readers who recall the writer's review of a previous book in this area, in Volume 14, October, 1979, reference was made to Neil Jacobson's chapter which was a critical review of the current literature on marital therapy. He and Ms. Margolin have now published their model for treating distressed couples. It is a social learning model and they are avowed behaviorists. They feel marital therapy is an area where therapists with diverse theoretical stances might find common ground.

The first two chapters provide the reader with background information on behavior therapy and the authors' theoretical framework for approaching the treatment of marital conflicts. Similarities and differences between behavioral and non-behavioral approaches are also discussed.

Quoting from the preface will provide the reader with a brief description as to what is presented in Chapters 3 through 9. These chapters:

consist of detailed explications of clinical strategies for treating couples, beginning with the initial interview and assessment phases of therapy, continuing through early treatment phases, and elaborating on various techniques such as communication training, problem-solving training, contingency contracting, behavior exchange procedures, cognitive restructuring, and paradoxical directives. Chapter 7 includes a manual for couples to be used in conjunction with therapy. Chapter 9 covers a number of specific problems and issues which commonly confront the marital therapist: treating deficits in sexual and affectionate interaction, integrating marital therapy with a partial focus on child problems, and treating partners where one spouse is clinically depressed. Also discussed in this chapter are problems of physical aggression, jealousy, and issues related to divorce and separation, along with the treatment of couples consisting of one highly affiliative and one very independent partner. (p. x)

Chapter 10 presents a review of the current outcome research and, in the last chapter, two case studies close out the book. One case study is presented as a "success" and one is presented as "not so successful".

While readers with a good grounding in behavioral theory and terminology will find themselves right at home, others will have to spend some time translating the material into their particular jargon. This, however, should not take away from the contents of the book because numerous examples are provided to illustrate the authors' points. The authors also emphasize the importance of a scientist-practitioner model throughout the book and are highly critical of practitioners who continue to provide marital counselling without evaluating their approach.

The importance of objective behavioral assessment of relationship dysfunction is also emphasized and most of the current behavioral instruments or inventories are discussed and critiqued. This section should be of particular value to those searching for a concrete methodology for beginning marital counselling sessions.

Furthermore, a variety of techniques (e.g., cognitive restructuring and the use of paradox) are carefully presented, discussed and evaluated as to when they are most likely to be effective and when they should probably not be used.

Of particular interest is the Problem Solving manual presented within Chapter 7. Although not a particularly unique approach to problem solving, this section could and should be used with couples as part of the treatment process. It has the advantage of being neatly packaged for the therapist and contains several good examples of situations when a problem-solving approach can be helpful.

The reader will find it refreshing that these behaviorists allow that the internal "happenings" of the person are legitimate data in therapy. This is a pleasant change from some of the earlier writers expressing the behavioral viewpoint. They also present several good suggestions on how therapists and, in turn, couples can get at this internal data in a way that encourages behavior change. More importantly, they emphasize the importance and impact of the relationship between the therapist and the couple on the successful outcomes of treatment. This has often been neglected by others writing from a behavioral theoretical base.

As is pointed out in the book, there is a danger with a cookbook approach. The untrained and/or inexperienced helper may tend to lift out and apply specific techniques without a solid theory base. This almost ensures failure and the neophyte should be forewarned.

In summary, these authors openly disagree with non-behavioral approaches to marital therapy.