

entirely different this is from the point of view of classical ego psychology and Kernberg's Kleinian orientation.

Whether or not the psychology of the self represents a new paradigm in psychoanalysis, a complementary approach, or a side issue in standard analytic technique, remains to be debated and decided, but it is inconceivable to me how any psychoanalyst or psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapist who immerses himself or herself in the almost 400 pages of this book will not emerge with a host of new ideas toward the understanding of clinical material.

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CAROLYN COSTIN: *Your Dieting Daughter: Is She Dying for Attention?* Brunner/Mazel, Inc. New York, 1997, 217 pp., \$19.95 (pbk.) ISBN 0-87630-836-1.

The goal of *Your Dieting Daughter: Is She Dying for Attention?* is to "help you understand and explore the various complexities of the dieting issue and to prepare you to deal with your daughter and our 'thin is in' society" (p. 5). Carolyn Costin, herself a "recovered" anorexic and currently a therapist specializing in disordered eating, has written a book that gives pause to the sophisticated psychotherapy professional.

Part autobiography, part self-help book, part guide to parents, it is hard to know where to shelve this book. Costin presents her ideas and information from the standpoint of "I have been there, and 'recovered,' so I can help you." And indeed, one of the strong points of her book is how it allows the reader into the thinking of Costin's clients with anorexia and bulimia nervosa and compulsive eating disorders. Clearly this field has been a life's work for Costin, and she is versed in the internal pain of these clients and their families. One senses that she has done some sensitive hands-on work with them, and the letters in the book from clients and their families are touching testimonials. However, what one gleans from these letters and the book itself is the picture of a therapeutic interaction of a somewhat personal, nontraditional nature. For traditionally trained psychotherapists, this immediately raises the red flag of potential boundary violations.

In addition to her unorthodox approach as a therapist, Costin as a writer is weak in several respects. Written for a lay audience, *Your Dieting Daughter* is uneven in content and erroneous in some facts. Though she does a fair job of educating her audience about eating disorders, Costin has an ax to grind—and grind she does. In her view, the "thin is in" society must take all the blame for the rise of disordered-eating problems. Though in line with current feminist thinking, Costin's view is too simplistic to make a significant contribution. This is no competition for Susie Orbach's *Fat Is a Feminist Issue*. Costin maintains a dogmatic focus on the cultural idealization of thinness as the prime instigator of eating disorders. Her book gives no hint that the symptom complexes of eating disorders and obesity are multidimensional or that they differ in psychodynamics and types of character disorders. Her view is that these girls are persuaded by society that

they need to be thin, and further pushed toward “perfection” by mothers unable to take care of themselves and fathers who don’t have access to the world of feelings and needs. In her simple view, “Fathers are excluded from therapy because everyone is afraid of them and unwilling to be honest” (p. 41). The bias is against men. “Could it be,” Costin asks, “if the mother were getting more nurturing from her husband, she would not need to turn to her child to gratify her emotional needs, thus creating a ‘parentified’ child, so common among anorexics?” (p. 41).

References, where they exist, are dated, from the 1980s. Often, research is referred to without citation. Erroneous information and sweeping statements are flagrant in the areas of nutrition and psychotherapy. Although psychotherapy is referred to positively, there are strident errors in basic information: “Freud, the ‘father’ of psychotherapy, put great emphasis on fathering and in fact his whole oedipal theory involves the conflict and negotiation that children experience in their relationship with their father” (p. 38).

Your Dieting Daughter does contain some useful material. “Guidelines for Parents” and “So You Want to Go on a Diet” are good chapters. Yet potentially valuable material is soon diminished by the book’s global generalities. There is no discussion as to who is more at risk for eating disorders. All children are exposed to society’s messages, but not all are prone to eating disorders. This is an area that has been studied and written about at length. A referral to the work of family therapists such as Salvatore Minuchin and that of psychotherapists Philip Wilson, Charles Hogan, and Ira Mintz, who discuss in depth symptom choice, would have been helpful.

In sum, this book, although containing some sensitive information based on a lifetime of work with these clients, falls short. It does not offer, in a responsible way, a balanced and accurate presentation of the causes and treatment of disordered eating. As a recommended primer for parents, it fails.

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WILLIAM BREER: *The Adolescent Molester*. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, IL, 1996, 239 pp., \$49.95 (cloth), ISBN 0-398-06571-3, \$34.95 (pbk.), ISBN 0-398-06572-1.

“Molesting is a disorder of masculinity,” writes William Breer, “and it is best prevented by repairing the damaged masculinity.” Breer is a clinical social worker in private practice in California who has treated over 336 male sex offenders in his fourteen-year career. His first book, *Diagnosis and Treatment of the Young Male Victim of Sexual Abuse*, was written in 1992. In this second book, Breer has changed his stance on some controversial issues, such as the appropriateness of female therapists, and outlines for the reader what is a psychodynamic model of male development, which he incorporates into the treatment of adolescent male sexual offenders.