

mothers with dissociative identity disorder for their daughters, and a patient's statement on her marriage, followed by 16 chapters by different authors, for each of whom a biographical note is provided. They range from Peter Fonagy, PhD FBA, Freud Memorial Professor of Psychoanalysis, University College London, as well as Director of the Sub-Department there of Clinical Health Psychology; and Dr Felicity De Zulueta, an Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist in Psychotherapy, Maudsley Hospital; to a Detective Chief Inspector Clive Driscoll, who has completed 29 years of service in the Metropolitan Police, during which time he worked within a variety of units, including a child protection team and general Criminal Investigation Department studies. There are also two Professors of Psychology besides four members or fellows of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, including Dr De Zulueta. The headings include 'Multiple voices versus metacognition: an attachment theory perspective', by Professor Fonagy; 'Traumatic stress disorder and dissociation: traumatic stress service in the Maudsley Hospital', by Professor De Zulueta; 'The shoemaker and the elves', by Ms Sinason.

This volume is entirely devoted to a sometimes childlike presentation (by the patients) of purported dissociative states. The 'abuse family' is described by Adah Sachs, an analytic psychotherapist who 'lectures widely on trauma and dissociation, and maintains a small private practice'. The chapter of Dr Joan Goodwin of Galveston, Texas is titled 'Snow-White and the seven diagnoses'. There is throughout an uncritical acceptance of the validity of dissociative identity disorder.

I was distressed to learn from a healthy list of clinical and support links that 'The largest mental health charity, Mind, has a helpful booklet on "dissociation" for patients and their friends and families'. No one cites among the references any critical statement by a professional society, such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists, with respect to recovered memories, although belief in the latter is incorporated throughout the volume. Sydney Brandon's name is singularly absent, along with the almost equally forthright statements of the Canadian Psychiatric Association and the Australian Psychological Association, or any discussion of the critical views of current theories of dissociation. Perish the thought – all that critical stuff has been substantially ignored.

The legal risks of false accusations and the disastrous outcomes of treatment in many high-income countries, especially in the USA, are not to be found in the book, although there are three pages by Phil Mollon, PhD, on memory and dissociative identity disorder, and a passing mention of false memory in three other places. The evidence for outcomes with 'dissociative identity disorder treatment' fails to come to grips with any of the serious flaws in the dissociation theory and 'dissociative identity disorder', or for that matter with the very poor results of its treatment compared with normal management of similar patients under other diagnoses.

It is a book for believers only.

Harold Merskey Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry, University of Western Ontario, Canada. Email: harold.merskey@sympatico.ca

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