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Review of *Adolescents After Divorce*. Christy M. Buchanan, Eleonor E. Maccoby and Sanford M. Dornbusch. Reviewed by Dorinda Noble, Louisiana State University.

Dorinda N. Noble
Louisiana State University

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in the informal sectors of the developing countries. The reader, whether a researcher, an educator, a policy maker or an international agency administrator, will find this book very informative and useful in terms of understanding some effective and innovative ways to extend social security benefits to a large number of disadvantaged population of the world especially, those who are not covered under any formal sector.

Finally, even though these case studies represent only a fraction of the problem and offers positive results in a limited way, I consider this edition by W. V. Ginneken as a significant contribution to addressing the needs of the millions of suffering humanity. In that broader sense, the book definitely makes an immense contribution to the understanding of human rights and social development today.

Mizanur R. Miah

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Christy M. Buchanan, Eleonor E. Maccoby and Sanford M. Dornbusch, *Adolescents after Divorce*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000. \$19.95 papercover. [August 1, 2000].

The fate of children whose parents have divorced has been the fodder of many religious sermons, political speeches, scholarly investigations, and coffee-shop chats. Much of what the public hears about children of divorce is shot through with passion, rhetoric, and assumptions—but not necessarily with clear thinking. *Adolescents after Divorce*, however, offers a refreshing avenue of insight and clarity about children of divorce.

Adolescents after Divorce begins with a disclaimer that it does not push a philosophical or political agenda regarding divorce or children's living situations, and by the conclusion of the book, the reader agrees that the material is presented in an even-handed manner. The writing style of the work is excellent: it is clear, accurate, scholarly, and yet quite interesting. The authors have achieved an objective but engaging tone. The material presented in the book acknowledges the passion inherent in the subject of children and divorce, but does not allow that passion to swamp rational thinking.

The authors cite many scholarly investigations which have attempted to determine how well children function after divorce, but wisely, the authors do not argue and fuss with the results of other studies, though results and conclusions of different investigations vary widely. *Adolescents and Divorce* also skims some of the policy decisions about custody arrangements which different states have crafted, but the book is not about policy; it is children. The results presented in *Adolescents after Divorce* are offered as yet another piece in a complex puzzle, alerting social scientists and policy makers to the need for much more in-depth study of how children adjust in different residential arrangements after divorce.

The investigation reported in *Adolescents after Divorce* is an offshoot of the Stanford Custody Project, which followed over 1100 families in northern California. Over 500 adolescents (aged 10–18) from 365 families were interviewed for this book; the parents of these children had separated approximately 5 years prior to the interviews reported. Consequently, these youngsters had already weathered the initial upheaval of divorce and had developed some coping styles. An aim of this research was to determine how well those coping styles worked: were these young people making acceptable school marks; were they involved in illegal activities; were they depressed? Another principle aim of the study was to link the children's adjustment to their residential arrangement (living with mother, living with father, or living in a dual-custody arrangement) and its stability. Did the living arrangement and its stability affect how well youngsters adjusted to parenting styles, such as rule-making and emotional support; did it affect the way children handled conflict between their parents; did it affect the way young people accepted a new partner for the parent? Telephone interviews provided the primary source of data to answer these questions. The reader was not given much information about the exact structure of these interviews, nor how interviewers were trained. Data were analyzed using a variety of statistical tests, but the book does not center on methodology or statistics; rather it reviews the results and conclusions of those results.

The most compelling result is one that celebrates the resilience and individuality of children: despite the dire warnings one hears

about negative effects of divorce, in fact, the children in this study were, on the whole, adjusting satisfactorily. The fact that the study results demonstrated a great deal of variability only highlights the fact that children are individuals who respond differently to family upheaval. Children defy easy characterizations; they confound the experts by responding in unexpected ways which often show unusual emotional agility and profound survival skills.

The majority of youngsters in this study lived with their mothers. Adjustment seemed to be somewhat better (lower depression scores, better school functioning, and less deviant activities) for adolescents who lived with their mothers or in dual residences. Children living with fathers seemed to have the most adjustment problems, perhaps because the adolescents often moved in with daddy after experiencing some life problem. Fathers also had more money, in general, and perhaps their professional pursuits interfered with their ability to monitor and stay involved with children. Suffice it to say, children (particularly females) living with fathers appeared to have more problems.

Children in dual residences seemed to function fairly well, with some variability in the sample. And children in general seemed to adjust well to a new partner in the parent's life, particularly if the parent and his/her partner married. Remarriage seemed to raise family functioning (the management of children) to a new level. Interestingly, how often children visited the non-residential parent seemed to matter little to the closeness they felt toward that nonresidential parent, as long as they had at least some visitation. A continuing relationship with the nonresidential parent seemed to contribute positively to adolescent adjustment, and this was particularly true with father-residence children. Many children—particularly girls—in the study reported feeling “caught” in loyalty struggles between parents, particularly if parents were in conflict. The closer adolescents were to their parents, both residential or nonresidential, the less likely they were to report feeling caught.

Adolescents after Divorce provokes much thought about what kinds of living arrangements foster healthy adjustment in children after their parents split up. It also leads the reader to the intuitive conclusion that children need, above all, the warmth

and support of their parents, regardless of where those parents live, to give youngsters a sense of well-being and competence in life.

Dorinda N. Noble
Louisiana State University

Ralph H. Earle and Dorothy J. Barnes, *Independent Practice for the Mental Health Professional: Growing a Private Practice for the 21st Century*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel, 1999. \$24.95 hardcover.

Directed at newly minted clinicians and at seasoned agency clinicians new to private practice, *Independent Practice for the Mental Health Professional* presents essential information and material to those planning to start a private practice in the current mental health environment. While acknowledging the significant (and mostly negative) changes managed care has brought to the delivery of private practice mental health services, the authors are decidedly optimistic about the future of private practice in the 21st century. While many other works cover the nuts and bolts of setting up a private practice and the design of marketing strategies, the current effort by Earle and Barnes is unique in stressing the importance of the role of the personality and lifestyle of the clinician in meeting the expectations of clients and ensuring the success of private practice in mental health.

The book begins with a chapter that poses questions designed to assist clinicians reflect and begin to define the type of private practice they envision. It also helps them decide if they are suited for private practice at all. This is followed by a chapter devoted to providing readers with a brief description of the practices of several clinicians, which serve to illustrate the differences and similarities among private practice practitioners. One of the chapters addresses head on the apparent incompatibility between the image of a warm, trusting, and caring professional helper with that of the profit-driven, materialistic, unscrupulous, aggressive entrepreneur, and it shows how belief in these stereotypes can negatively affect the marketing strategy of the private practitioner. Also included in the book are chapters covering