Book Review

Editor: Yoram Barak

Childhood in the Shadow of the Holocaust Survived Children and Second Generation
Editors: Z. Solomon and J. Chaitin
DanaCode: 31–4311
Recommended price: NIS88

Throughout the years it has been a commonly held, albeit mistaken, assumption that children during the Holocaust were “too young” to remember the traumatic events that they experienced and were thus not considered to be “true” survivors. Moreover, when the war had passed and these children wished to speak out of their tragic exposure, their elders silenced them. Part of this conspiracy of silence resulted in sparse attention being paid to this particular group of survivors.

Zahava Solomon and Julia Chaitin have created a unique and moving volume focusing on child survivors, children born to survivors (second generation) and the grandchildren of survivors (third generation). This is an ambitious and encompassing project. It is the first of its kind to be published in Hebrew and to aim at presenting the Israeli audience with the vast body of data and experience accumulated over decades of observation, research and treatment. The long list of contributors include leading figures from Israel and abroad and they unfold a wide array of issues including psychological, psychiatric, social work, anthropological and sociological perspectives.

The book is divided into two parts: the first describes child survivors and the second the children and grandchildren of survivors. The scope of both parts of this book is wide and deep. Memories, loss and development, families and parents-children relationships, post-traumatic symptomatology, aging, the trips back to Europe, group therapy, intergenerational transmission, collective memories and more are all discussed.

At the risk of sounding blasé I recommend that this book become a part of the training of each mental health professional in Israel. The Holocaust cannot be considered just another chapter in the textbooks of psychiatry. It is our duty as teachers of future generations of clinicians to make their acquaintance with these children of the Holocaust.

Yoram Barak

Correspondence

Jewish children hidden in France during World War II who stayed in France since Liberation: psychology and psychopathology study

Dear Editor,

Within the context of a special issue on the subject of the Shoah and Psychiatry, I would like to bring to the attention of journal readers a recent study for a doctoral degree I have just completed. It concerns the psychic construction of people who, as children, were hidden in order to escape threats to their lives during World War II, in France, because they were born Jewish. After setting out the historical context of the relationship between France and the Jews, and in particular the historical context of the period from 1939 to 1945, I outline different psychological theories of child development, as well as the life events that can interfere with the process of child development. Next, I present a review of the psycholog-