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## Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

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Paterson, John, Blashko, Carl & Janzen, Henry. (1991). *When You Stand Alone*. Edmonton, Alta.: Three Pears Publishing. 364 pp.

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*Reviewed by:* Frank Van Hesteren, University of Saskatchewan.

I had to write to you about "standing alone" and what has helped me. When I moved out on my own . . . at the age of twenty it was the most lonely time I ever went through. On top of it all I had a lot of problems, anxiety, inner turmoil and a lot of fear. Relationships and making friends were not easy for me. I couldn't trust people. I never had any outlets for this stress so it took its toll and as a result I became ill. I got arthritis. . . . I had to cope with the illness, pain, fear and all my problems alone for many years. (p. 14)

Drawing from their complementary helping profession backgrounds and their wealth of experience in "giving psychology away" on their award winning radio program, *That's Living*, John Paterson, Carl Blashko, and Henry Janzen have written a timely and valuable book exploring various aspects of the phenomenon of loneliness.

The book is divided into five sections. In the first section, "Personal Reflections on Loneliness," the authors provide several compelling first-person accounts of how loneliness is actually experienced by individuals in a variety of life circumstances. In Section Two, the experience of loneliness is examined in the context of a variety of "family circumstances," with particular attention being given to the themes, "Loneliness and the Elderly," "Loneliness and the Family," "Alone and Single," and "The Aloneness of Single Parents." In Section Three, several "conditions" associated with the experience of loneliness are identified and discussed. Among the themes highlighted in this section are "Alone in School," "Anxiety and Loneliness," "Depression and Loneliness," "Loneliness and the Handicapped," and "Life in the Fast Lane."

Having provided an understanding of loneliness that is grounded in the experience of people in a wide array of family situations and life circumstances, the authors, in Section Four, discuss loneliness from a theoretical perspective. In the chapter comprising this wisely located section, a portrait of a typical lonely person is fleshed out, selected correlates of loneliness are identified, and a variety of theories of loneliness is reviewed. Section Five rounds out the book by suggesting several strategies for constructively dealing with the experience of loneliness, ranging from the treatment of anxiety and depression through the use of medication and various psychological approaches to specific strategies for being "successfully alone," such as working toward self-understanding, learning to appreciate others more, and faith development.

*When You Stand Alone* has some remarkably appealing features which compel me to enthusiastically recommend it. First, the reader's interest is captured and maintained because the contents of the book are so consistently grounded in the real life experiences of clients, radio-callers, and the

authors themselves. I found myself readily identifying with the anecdotes and stories presented and I came to better understand the experience of loneliness in my own life. Second, this is a decidedly “reader friendly” book. There is a refreshing directness and transparency evident in the way it is written. I particularly appreciated the authors’ willingness to acknowledge and poignantly share their own encounters with loneliness and to unabashedly disclose their own often strong convictions relative to the topics and issues taken up in the book. Third, the book is well grounded in the extant theory and research pertaining to the topic of loneliness. Indeed, the theoretical chapter, in and of itself, qualifies as a significant contribution to the literature base in this area of study.

My overall enthusiasm for *When You Stand Alone* notwithstanding, there are certain respects in which I believe its relevance and credibility might have been enhanced. First, I would suggest that the discussion of the phenomenon of “love”—based as it is in Sternberg’s rather clinical and theoretically abstract interpretation—would have been enriched through the incorporation of sources such as Erich Fromm (*The Art of Loving*), Milton Mayeroff (*On Caring*), and Leo Buscaglia (*Living, Loving, and Learning*). Second, more attention might have been given to gender differences in the experience of loneliness, as these are suggested, for example, in the writings of Carol Gilligan (*In a Different Voice*) and Mary Field Belenky and her associates (*Women’s Ways of Knowing*). Such consideration of gender related issues is particularly important in this book, given that all of its authors are men. Finally, I would have appreciated a more substantial and representative identification of classic and current developmental sources in the developmentally focused chapter entitled “Alone in School.”

In sum, *When You Stand Alone* is a definite “keeper” and a welcome addition to the self-help and counselling literatures. Apart from being a useful self-help source, per se, for people experiencing loneliness, the book can assist prospective and practicing counsellors in better understanding the phenomenon of loneliness and what might be done to help clients who are experiencing it. Not least significantly, as was certainly the case for me, the book can help counsellors themselves to constructively deal with the experience of loneliness in *their* personal and professional lives.

My hat is off to the authors for the fine care they have provided over the air-waves during the past several years and for creating a book that it has been my pleasure to review.

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Pasternak, M. G. (1979). *Helping kids learn multi-cultural concepts: A handbook of strategies*. Illinois: Research Press Company, 249 pp., (softcover).

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*Reviewed by:* Amritpal Singh Shergill, University of British Columbia.

Michael G. Pasternak’s book entitled *Helping Kids Learn Multi-Cultural Concepts* is a valuable resource handbook which provides educators with a wide variety of strategies and activities for encouraging multicultural literacy and