
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Maltz, W. & Holman B. (1987). *Incest and sexuality: A guide to understanding and healing*. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books.

Reviewed by: Despina Nifakis, McMaster University

Incest and Sexuality: A Guide to Understanding and Healing gives an excellent overview of how incest can affect a woman's sexuality and sexual relationships. There are many books on the market these days that deal with incest, but none that specifically touch on the sensitive issue of sexuality. The authors have written this book for incest survivors, their partners, and for therapists. They attempt to show how sexual abuse has affected the sexuality of these women, as well as, indirectly, their partners' lives. They also propose strategies for helping survivors and their partners work through these issues.

The book can be viewed as covering three distinct areas. The first area provides an overview of incest, its effect on the survivor's perception of herself, and what the incest family dynamics are like. The second area covers the areas of relationships and sexuality, and how the incest has an impact on both. In the last area, incest survivors are directed to ways of getting help and reclaiming their sexuality.

The first four chapters give a brief overview of incest and the dynamics of incest families. Emphasis is placed on how exploitation keeps children from feeling that their initial sexual sensations are under their own control. Rather, the message they get is that their sexual activities are dominated by the perpetrator's needs. Chapter four discusses how children who are sexually abused use dissociation, numbing, and other escape mechanisms to protect themselves, and to cope with their overwhelming situation. Chapter five provides a clear picture of how the incest and the ensuing feelings of powerlessness have a strong impact on sense of self and self-esteem.

Chapter six begins the section that looks at the messages about sexuality and roles that incest survivors have received. The sexual concerns that incest survivors have are outlined clearly and are examined along with the developmental concerns that adolescent girls experience in the "normal" process of growing up. This leads into a chapter on relationships and the anxieties experienced by survivors. The authors effectively use quotes from adolescent survivors to illustrate their points. A characterization of the types of relationships that incest survivors get into is also provided (e.g., "I want everything, I deserve nothing"). Chapter eight focuses on how incest affects sexuality. This chapter is divided into smaller sections covering topics such as dating; sexual preference; sexual arousal, response, and satisfaction.

The last three chapters focus on getting help. Chapter nine gives concrete suggestions to survivors for use on their own to help them get in touch with their sexuality. However, some suggestions presuppose a psychologically healthy and caring partner, and this is not always a reality for incest survivors. Chapter ten examines how the partners of incest survivors feel and how couples can work towards understanding each other. Communication is emphasized as vital and

the incest survivor is encouraged to identify what she needs from her partner, and to express it.

The last chapter deals with seeking professional help. There is a good presentation of what an incest survivor can expect of an initial interview. A discussion of some of the therapeutic goals and techniques that can be employed is very useful. Good treatment strategies for sex therapy, along with an outline of a nine session treatment plan are also presented. This can be very useful for therapists working with these specific concerns.

There is also an appendix to this book that covers a very important topic: male incest survivors and their sexuality. There is a paucity of research in this area and the authors have covered the area well considering the limited space. Once again the effective use of quotes helps to further our understanding of the effects of sexual abuse on men.

The emphasis of the book seems to be that a resolution of some of the feelings about incest can motivate the survivor to reclaim her sexuality for herself. It is clear that sexuality is so closely tied to feelings of self worth, that it becomes difficult to discuss one without also discussing the other. This book certainly fills a gap in the literature on incest by providing a thorough overview of this important and timely topic.

Martin, J. (1987). *Cognitive-Instructional Counseling*. London, Ontario: The Althouse Press.

Reviewed by: J. Gold, Kent State University

Throughout his book, Martin refers to counselling as a process of psycho-education. Based on the educational aspect of this description, Martin describes six objectives of the counselling process, the total composition of which is labeled cognitive competence. These characteristics are dynamic processing capability, efficient processing skills, elaborated problem schemata, task-relevant problem-solving structures, empowered self-schemata, and integration of relevant structures and processes. These then form the goals of cognitive-instructional counselling.

Martin's theory, and the implications thereof, are based on the assumption that "human. . . problems arise from failures to achieve personally-desired goals that are themselves embedded in internal structures of personal meaning and knowledge" (vii). Therefore, the purpose of therapeutic intervention is to assist in the formation of individual cognitive structures and processes designed to support directed action towards the achievement of personal goals.

Martin begins his work with a historical examination of the educational approach to counselling. This review provides five basic theoretical constructs for the educational model of counselling: people are "goal driven;" difficulties arise from failure to achieve personally-desired goals; counselling is a purposeful, instructional activity; cognitive competence underlies the goals of change and growth towards which counselling is directed; due to the individual nature of goals, the process must be client-centred. These constructs present a blend of humanistic and scientific theory and practice.