

**MULTIPLE MAN: EXPLORATIONS IN POSSESSION AND MULTIPLE PERSONALITY** by Adam Crabtree. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, London, New York, Sydney & Toronto, 1985. 278 pp. £8.95 (paperback).

Crabtree is a Toronto psychotherapist with extensive experience treating patients suffering from ostensible possession. And according to the book's dust jacket, he is 'one of the most knowledgeable historians of mesmerism in the English-speaking world'. His book is written for the general reader; but it is nevertheless a serious introduction to the topic of human multiplicity. Perhaps its most novel feature is that it draws heavily on the author's clinical background.

*Multiple Man* is divided into four parts. Part One, 'The Multiple Self', surveys the history of hypnosis and the discovery of divided consciousness, and then summarizes some famous cases of multiple personality. Part Two, 'The Possession Experience', reviews the classic literature on the many varieties of possession. Crabtree devotes separate chapters to willing victims and unwilling victims, and another to the standard methods of curing possession. Part Three, 'A Therapist's Casebook', is the most original of the four sections, since it presents new case material from Crabtree's own practice. This part of the book surveys apparent possession by family members, group-mind possession, ostensible reincarnation, and various difficult-to-classify puzzle cases with possible paranormal elements. It also contains a chapter on Crabtree's insights regarding therapy in possession cases. The last part, 'Coming to Terms with Multiple Man', briefly surveys the theoretical options, and then sketches Crabtree's own view of the matter.

When Crabtree discusses treatment, he is careful to note that his suggestions do not presuppose any particular theory of the nature of human multiplicity. To treat a case of apparent possession, the important thing is for the therapist to try to understand the possession experience from the patient's point of view, and act *as if* the possessing entity were real and in some deep way distinct from the subject under treatment. I would imagine that caseworkers will find Crabtree's accounts of his methods both interesting and valuable.

I was disappointed, however, by Crabtree's general approach to historical material, and in particular to his discussion in Part One. Since Crabtree doesn't give full references in the text for historical claims and for his numerous quotations, his book has little utility for the serious scholar, or even for someone embarking on a careful study of the subject. For example, there is no clue as to where Crabtree found his account of the first surgical use of hypnotic anesthesia. Granted, the book doesn't pretend to be a scholarly treatise. But it would have been little trouble—and it would not have detracted from the book's readability—to at least append page numbers to quotations, and be more explicit about sources. This would be especially useful in those instances where Crabtree disagrees with other major discussions of the evidence. For instance, Crabtree and Ellenberger (1970) disagree over Mesmer's belief in the efficacy of animal magnetism. Crabtree claims Mesmer didn't think it would cure *all* ailments. But Ellenberger reports that Mesmer believed it would render hospitals and physicians obsolete; and he mentions Mesmer's famous aphorism: 'There is only one illness and one healing' (p. 63).

I wish also that Crabtree had at least mentioned some major issues about the early studies of hypnosis and dissociation. For example, when he discusses the

apparent community of sensation between hypnotist and subject, he never addresses the obvious questions concerning controls against sensory leakage, and the patient's deep need to please the hypnotist. And more seriously, Crabtree seriously distorts the discussion of dissociation by claiming that the hypnotic self is 'completely distinct' (p. 22) from the waking self, contrary to 50 years of ingenious research by Messerschmidt (1927-8), Hilgard (1977) and others, which demonstrates a greater degree of interference or interaction between conscious and subconscious processes than would have been expected on the hypothesis of complete functional independence between them.

Crabtree also distorts the importance of Hilgard's investigation of the 'hidden observer'. For one thing, it does *not* support positing the existence of 'any number of individual hidden personalities within the ordinary human subject' (p. 243). To call the hidden observer a personality is to take serious liberties with the concept of a personality, and ignore some major theoretical issues in the interpretation of the evidence. Indeed, Crabtree takes J. Beahrs' theoretical speculations on hidden observer studies (1982) as *confirmation* of his own view of the matter. But Beahrs' remarks can't possibly confirm Crabtree's view; they merely agree with it. And in fact, both Beahrs and Crabtree seem oblivious to some major issues in the interpretation of the evidence. In particular, they ignore (a) the obvious lack of depth and breadth of the hidden observers as personalities; (b) the vital fact that there is no way to conclusively take an inventory of the number of actual distinct personalities or fragments within an individual (as opposed, say, to one fragment giving itself several names); and (c) the way in which the description or presentation of the hidden observer could be subtly colored by the theoretical milieu in which it is elicited. With regard to this last point, one of the most striking facts about the history of hypnosis (as Crabtree should have known) is how different researchers, representing different theoretical traditions, reported different sorts of phenomena, corresponding to their theoretical biases. And although Crabtree touches briefly on the topic of iatrogenesis later in the book, he apparently does not see the relevance of demand characteristics in this context.

I found less to object to in Crabtree's survey of the history of possession, although equally serious problems might be evident to someone better versed in that literature. Still, I was disappointed by Crabtree's apparent acceptance of Hyslop's weak argument about what would constitute evidence for spirit possession (pp. 132-3). Both Hyslop and Crabtree seem to underestimate the possible role and efficacy of ESP in mediumistic performances. The last chapter of Eisenbud's *Parapsychology and the Unconscious* (1983) should be essential reading in this context. And—a very minor quibble—Crabtree claims (p. 145) to divide possession cases into five categories, but then lists only four.

By the time I reached the theoretical speculations of the final chapter, I was thus prepared to find much to object to. But despite Crabtree's continued over-reaction to the hidden observer studies, this brief chapter was very good indeed. Crabtree's theoretical reflections are very thoughtful, and in some cases novel and helpful. I particularly liked his distinction between event-amnesia and identity-amnesia, and his emphasis on therapeutic dramatization as an example of the human 'capacity to create and enact personalities' (p. 246). I also applaud his useful image of personality as a tool, and his Kantian appeal to something like

a Transcendental Unity of Apperception, an 'ultimate self', which is our source of unity, but which cannot be directly known in the way our personalities can be known.

On the whole, then, Crabtree's book is a mixed blessing. Those interested (even if only casually) in the history of hypnosis should stick to Ellenberger—or better, wait for Alan Gauld's forthcoming and presumably definitive work on the subject. But I recommend the book to therapists interested in the dynamics and treatment of ostensible possession cases. And parapsychologists should find Crabtree's case studies of interest, especially those involving apparent possession by the living (e.g., family members). In some of these, the change in symptoms of *both* the possessed and the ostensible possessor, after successful treatment of the former, suggested some sort of telepathic or psychokinetic connection between them. Overall, although *Multiple Man* is not a work for the serious scholar, it succeeds as a lucid and enjoyable popular presentation of the material.

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PROJECIOLOGIA: PANORAMA DAS EXPERIENCIAS DA CONSCIENCIA FORA DO CORPO HUMANO (Projectiology: Panorama of Experiences of Consciousness Out of the Human Body) by Waldo Vieira. Edição do Autor, Rio de Janeiro, 1986. xxviii + 900 pp. No price stated.

This imposing book of over 900 pages is a treatise on the field of 'projectiology', a 'subdiscipline[of]parapsychology, dealing with energetic projections of consciousness (etheric double) and with projections of consciousness itself . . . outside the human body, that is, the action of consciousness operating outside the physical constraints of the brain and the biological body' (p. 13, this and other translations are mine). Although most of the book is devoted to OBEs, other phenomena considered to be explained by projections of energy or consciousness from the body are also discussed briefly.

Its author, Waldo Vieira, is a Brazilian physician who has had OBEs since he was nine years old. He is associated with the Center of Continuous Consciousness in Rio de Janeiro, which distributes this book freely to the collaborators of the Center and to 'students of projectiology in general' (p. vi). The purpose of the book is to present a general review of projectiology (with extensive bibliographical citations) and, among other things, inform those that want to induce the OBE in themselves about the topic as well as to present information to encourage