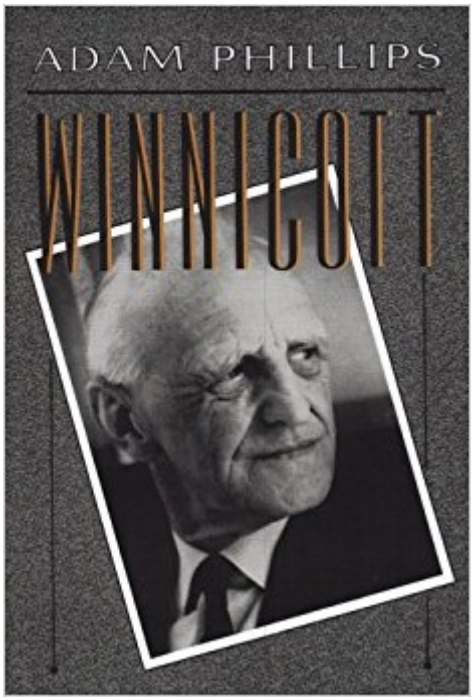
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Winnicott



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Synopsis

Although he founded no school of his own, 0. W. Winnicott (1896 1971) is now regarded as one of the most influential contributors to psychoanalysis since Freud. In over forty years of clinical practice, he brought unprecedented skill and intuition to the psychoanalysis of children. This critical new work by Adam Phillips presents the best short introduction to the thought and practice of D. W. Winnicott that is currently available.Winnicott's work was devoted to the recognition and description of the good mother and the use of the mother-infant relationship as the model of psychoanalytic treatment, His belief in natural development became a covert critique of overinterpretative methods of psychoanalysis. He combined his idiosyncratic approach to psychoanalysis with a willingness to make his work available to nonspecialist audiences. In this book Winnicott takes his place with Melanie K'ein and Jacques Lacan as one of the great innovators within the psychoanalytic tradition.

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Customer Reviews

[Adam Phillips] has added his name with distinction to the growing literature on Winnicott...[His] book presents a cohesive study of the major conceptual paradigms developed by Winnicott in his lifetime. (Macario Giraldo Psychiatry)A charming new book...that sums up the work of the British psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott, the only major therapist I know of whose language would have pleased a poet...[Winnicott's] depiction of the beginning of human life is a kind of wry sublime. The infant's relation to his mother, he says, is one of utter ruthlessness. He uses her in an absolute way, as if this were her destiny. Gradually, by making herself less available to him, the mother

"disillusions" the infant. Then, the wind knocked out of him, he is obliged to reconsider his ruthlessness...According to Mr. Phillips, Winnicott believed that this early experience sets a pattern for life, which is "a continual and increasingly sophisticated illusionment--disillusionment--re-illusionment process." Winnicott suggested that the artist's ruthlessness resembled, even repeated, the infant's. In the absence of a mother, the critic has to disillusion and re-illusion the artist. In therapy, the analyst does it for the patient. (Anatole Broyard New York Times Book Review)This short critical study is one of the best introductions to the British pediatrician and psychoanalyst who augmented object-relations theory and gave us the concept of the "good-enough" mother. (Boston Globe)This beautifully written account explores the development of British psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott's thought. The author, a fellow Briton and a child psychotherapist, is both a sympathetic interpreter and a perceptive critic of Winnicott's ideas from both a therapeutic and a scientific perspective...Phillips praises Winnicott for his major theoretical contributions--transitional phenomena, primary creativity, ruthlessness, the antisocial tendency, and the "true and false self"...By deftly weaving bits of biographical information into the narrative, the author places Winnicott in historical perspective, illuminating his often tactfully disguised quarrels with his predecessors, Freud and Klein, and suggesting how personal preoccupations became theoretical arguments in Winnicott's intuitive and idiosyncratic mind. (Mary Hayden Science Books and Films)A distinguished addition to the growing body of literature on the most important native-born English psychoanalyst. Phillips is especially illuminating on Winnicott's life, drawing, for example, on Winnicott's late poem "The Tree" for evidence of "his mother's depression, and her consequent inability to hold him"...[This book] is written in the spirit of independent thinking that Winnicott himself fostered. (Times Literary Supplement)

Adam Phillips is Principal Child Psychotherapist in the Wolverton Gardens Child and Family Consultation Centre, London.

This book is excellent: well-written and very informative as well as concise (150 pgs). I would recommend this book for both professionals in the field wanting to delve more deeply into Winnicott - and for interested lay people with a psychological bent. It helped me enormously to understand my early experiences with my mother. This unlocked a great deal of rich material that enabled me to gain more inner freedom.

This is a psychology and a psychologist whose work is worth giving the closest attention. Adam

Phillips does a fine job of interpretation. I have read Winnicott’s papers before, but as with much original thought, it emerges out of other people’s words and terminology i.e. Freud and M. Klein, and brings some ambiguity along in the process. Phillips helps clarify things. Make no mistake, Winnicott’s theories are based on a richer source of hands on experience than his predecessors ever had.

This was an extraordinary book. Phillips was able to bring Winnicott to life in a historical context as well as attend toWinnicott’s scholarly accomplishments. Reading this book, I was able to experience and gain a deeper understanding ofWinnocitt’s writings, work and the contributions to Psychoanalytic Theory and Early Development. The beauty ofthis little book was that I was able to ’make use" of it to teach colleagues in China due to it’s accessibility and depth.Rebecca

Easy reading! A great introduction to Winnicott!

Clear and lucid an excellent overview of Winnicott’s contribution

slow to start but does an excellent job of explaining what Winnicott meant by "good enough" mothering. I appreciate the author’s effort to point out that Winnicott ignored the concept of good-enough fathering, so now I just think "good-enough parenting."

A perfect fit.I think I have been waiting all my professional life for this combination.Adam Phillips writing about the magnificent Winnicott.They are psychically "spliced" in my mind.

Having read and studied and taught Winnicott over many years I was not surprised, but delighted at how well the writer (first?) and eminent psychoanalyst introduces and explains the man and his ideas to the beginner and the expert in study.One of the great gifts of this book is the plain jargon free language he uses to describe the simple and the complex about this somewhat strange and wonderful man Winnicott. It is a writing style that harkens back in some ways to the wonderful papers Winnicott read to the mothers fathers,educators. pastors and other "ordinary people" in his day in which he seemed to take so much pleasure.Adam Phillips added to a deeper understanding of the man for me and does a wonderful job of placing the pediatriciana in the history of this strange, wonderful, and fractured discipline.While Phillips alongside his colleagues and friends Christopher Bollas and Michael Eigen may well know and understand Winnicott as well as anyone else in the

field, he does something Winnicott would have surely appreciated.That is, he fails to idealize him.

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