

defense — with considerable publicity — in murder trials throughout the country. The author, a psychology professor, has appeared more than fifty times as an expert witness in such trials. Battered women go through hell. They deserve better than what they get from their mates. They also deserve better than the superficial pop psychology they get from Professor Walker. □

CONSULTING IN CHILD CUSTODY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UGLIEST LITIGATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.
By Melvin G. Goldzband. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1982. xiii + 183 pages. ISBN #0-669-05246-9.

Reviewed by Diane H. Schetky, MD

Goldzband sets out to provide guidelines for mental health professionals participating in child custody proceedings and to allay their anxieties about the legal arena. He makes a plea for our involvement reminding us that "these dreadful cases become more dreadful the more we stay away from them." The book covers the legal framework for child custody decisions and provides badly needed ethical guidelines for participation in these cases. The need for clear communication with attorneys, use of ancillary information, separation of treatment from evaluation, importance of demanding sufficient time in which to arrive at recommendations, and the value of knowing one's judges are all underscored. A transcript of a mock trial is included with footnotes that provide humorous insights into commonly used tactics of attorneys.

The clinical material presented in this book is excellent, however, I cannot say it alleviated my anxiety about participating in these cases. If anything, it made me more aware than ever of the potential pitfalls of custody cases and how our biases and subjective feelings may affect our position in court. Perhaps a modicum of anxiety is necessary to guard us against cockiness and the conviction of the accuracy of our findings.

Goldzband's style is succinct, candid, and very readable. My one complaint is that he is often too succinct. For instance, he makes only brief reference to the written report determining the child's preference and how much weight to give to it, and to countertransference phenomena. Each of these important areas could use further elaboration. The references cited are also skimpy. A minor irritation was his repeated reference to a woman physician he'd examined in a custody case as a "girl." One wonders if this represented unchecked countertransference.

In summary, this is a slim but very practical and provocative book that I would highly recommend to anyone involved in forensic psychiatry. □