Morris Eagle has the necessary credentials to introduce psychoanalysts to attachment theory and research: he has immersed himself in both intellectual worlds and clearly has a lot of respect and affection for both. He starts with the familiar—i.e. psychoanalytic—theory and goes on to explore the similarities and differences of psychoanalytic theory and attachment theory, as well as demonstrating how one can inform the other. Psychoanalytic theory is much more complex than attachment theory, and also at this point in its history, psychoanalysis is characterized by a plethora of schools of thought, not all of which are compatible. It only made sense, Eagle explains, to fit the more compact attachment theory into the massive meandering body of thought that we know as psychoanalysis than vice-versa.

The first four chapters of this compact volume introduce the history, core tenets, and key research findings of attachment theory and provide an in-depth explication of measuring adult attachment. Eagle focuses on “conceptual, theoretical, and clinical issues” in the historical introduction as he describes the influences on Bowlby’s development of attachment: his early work with disturbed children where he was influenced by social workers; his exposure to ethology, which demonstrated early instinctive bonding in animals; his interest in Harlow’s monkey experiments; his reading of the beginnings of cognitive psychology; and his psychoanalytic training in Freud’s drive psychology and Kleinian theory. For many years Bowlby was sharply criticized by the psychoanalytic world, and it is only in the last two decades that his theory has been seen as more compatible with it, as a result of the development of contemporary psychoanalytic theories.

Eagle’s chapter on core tenets of attachment theory lays out attachment as a behavioural system with at least as many biological and evolutionary credentials as Freud’s theory of drives. He explains how these behaviours promote attachment to caregivers, especially in the early years, but also
throughout life, and gives examples of attachment behaviours (e.g., crying and clinging) elicited by actual or perceived danger. When the attachment figure is nearby, offering a “secure base,” the child feels free to explore his world, thus promoting cognitive development. Over time, the child develops a set of internal representations of his parents, the “internal working model,” based on his or her interactions with them. This results in the attachment patterns exhibited by the child, which remain fairly stable even into adulthood, and affect the child’s relationships, performance, and caregiving abilities. Bowlby was concerned not only about the psychoanalytic lack of interest in the role of the child–parent relationship, he also lamented analysts’ indifference toward empirical testing of psychoanalytic theories. Predictably, he immediately submitted his theory to rigorous scientific testing, resulting in decades of high-quality research, much of it in human psychological development. Some of those studies have supported psychoanalytic tenets that never received empirical investigation from the psychoanalytic world, such as the importance of early childhood experiences in emotional development, the effects of parental psychology on the child, and the existence of repression. Eagle elucidates this, and much more, in the chapter on key research findings. Unfortunately, psychoanalysts rarely express appreciation for this valuable support and may not even be aware of it.

Two chapters are devoted to divergences between attachment theory and early and later psychoanalytic theories. There are many differences between early psychoanalytic theories and attachment, such as the importance of fantasy over actual events, and the Oedipal period over earlier experiences. The more contemporary theories share a focus on relationships with attachment theory; however, there is still much that is different. Methodological and epistemological differences are by far the most crucial and lie at the heart of the animosity many psychoanalysts have for attachment theory. Besides considering attachment theory as lacking in depth and complexity, psychoanalysts tend to eschew scientific research as a method for theory-building, relying instead only on information gleaned from their patients’ present state to inform their understanding of the patient’s past. The purpose of developing an understanding of the past is to inform the therapy, and it need not have much relationship to some external truth, or even to some combination of external truth and the patient’s perception of it. Yet psychoanalytic theories often are considered “truth” when the only method used, i.e., reconstruction of childhood, is unreliable. Attachment theorists have shown that issues that have long fascinated psychoanalysts can be studied, yet many analysts persist in ignoring them. The fact that contemporary
psychoanalysis has continued this tradition of substituting fanciful explanations for what clearly can be studied in an infinitely more persuasive manner is, to this reader, a significant disappointment. Eagle, however, seems to be more sanguine than this reader.

The chapters on attachment and sexuality and aggression are further examples of Eagle’s depth of psychoanalytic knowledge and keen intelligence, as he develops his argument that the integration of attachment needs and sexual desire in our adult lives is at the heart of successful long-term relationships, and that the individual with a secure attachment style is more likely to succeed in an intimate relationship. Although Bowlby’s theory sees the loss of an attachment figure as a major source of anger and aggression, other psychoanalytic schools posit different sources, such as aggression as a biological drive (Freud), aggression as an expression of the death instinct (Klein), and aggression as a response to narcissistic injury (Kohut). Eagle also describes the more complex explanations for anger and aggression suggested by Mitchell and Kernberg. This helps the reader to keep in mind that attachment theory is not an all-purpose theory that can explain human behaviour. Unfortunately, Eagle’s chapter on Freud’s thinking about adult sexuality can be pretty tough going, unless one is already very well-versed in or very interested in this theory.

In the chapter on attachment and psychopathology, Eagle considers the mental illnesses that psychoanalysts routinely treat, and what studies show about their relationship to attachment status. He makes the important observation that, although classical psychoanalysts believe that early experiences with caregivers strongly influence later psychopathology, there are few references by Freud to specific experiences resulting in specific psychopathology. In contrast, he notes that the contemporary theorists share something like the concept of internal working models of attachment. Additionally, he makes clear that, rather than directly predicting psychopathology, insecure attachment is a risk factor for psychopathology, and secure attachment tends to be a protective factor. In fact, attachment theory does not always deal with pathology; even insecure attachment is within the range of normal. Eagle also compares the large body of evidence that attachment researchers have produced on the relationship between attachment and psychopathology to the preponderance of clinical vignettes and individual case studies reported by psychoanalysts. He also makes the important case that these psychoanalytic studies are generally what he calls “follow-back,” rather than the usual “follow-up studies” of attachment research, and explains in some detail why the former method, likely unintentionally, deceives the reader.
The last two chapters, on the influence of attachment research and theory on clinical interventions, and the possibilities for convergence and integration, are likely the most interesting ones for clinicians. Rather than buying into the idea that some newer therapies are attachment-based, Eagle sees them as essentially psychoanalytic, needlessly packaged as “attachment therapies.” Instead, he supports Arietta Slade’s (1999) contention that attachment theory should inform our thinking and sensitize us to certain parts of our patients’ experience. Eagle also presents Bowlby’s own perspective on the role of the therapist. To this reader’s delight, Eagle brings to light Bowlby’s concern, expressed in his *A Secure Base* (1988), that psychoanalysts tend to be overly authoritarian in their interpretations. Eagle clarifies that even traditional analysts will wait for the material to be close to the patient’s consciousness before interpreting. Nonetheless, this reader believes that this authoritarian stance remains pervasive, despite the work of Paul Gray and Fred Busch, who have since presented an approach to interpretations that is similar to Bowby’s. This chapter includes very interesting research on the role of therapist and patient attachment, couple therapy, and most usefully, child-parent psychotherapy.

The final chapter, which aims for hopefulness in integrating psychoanalysis and attachment, should be read alongside Peter Fonagy’s *Attachment and Psychoanalysis* (2001). This is because Eagle chooses to omit the topics already covered there, but also because, in Fonagy’s chapter on Eagle’s thinking at the time, the reader has the opportunity to watch two of the finest and best-informed minds in psychoanalysis and attachment “discuss” these topics and see how their comments may have informed each other. In fact, Eagle makes substantial effort to explicate Fonagy’s use of the terms *reflective function* and *mentalization* and weaves them into attachment and psychoanalysis. Eagle concludes that a very useful integration has already taken place, in that attachment researchers have validated parts of psychoanalytic theory, a process he refers to as “fleshing out.” There would need to be some kind of paradigm shift, however, for the psychoanalytic world to value the simple beauty of attachment theory and its empirical scientific method. Psychotherapy researchers, like their attachment colleagues, are showing how useful other disciplines can be to the analytic world. If only the analytic world would pay attention.

**REFERENCES**


Termination is arguably one of the most diverse and problematic areas to instruct in psychoanalytic institutes, since few candidates have encountered termination of their cases. Even seasoned analysts recount a small number of terminated analysands as the result of the extended length of analytic treatment. Many classic termination references are from 30 to over 70 years old, and while useful, do not address the complexities of how the analytic dyad has changed in contemporary psychoanalysis, or how little we know about termination because of a paucity of systematic studies, and more particularly, how little we know of the analysand’s perspective, which is rarely included in the literature. As a seminar leader who has taught termination to candidates for over 20 years, I have become aware of the discrepancies between how we analysts talk about termination and how the process unfolds between us and our analysands. Often not noted, often not said, and often not written is the actual experience of analysands, their words, their feelings, their thoughts.

In his foreword to this slim volume Gabbard notes, “Few of my cases seemed to follow the termination pattern described in the classic articles on the subject. Moreover, I began to realize that little data has been collected on this subject . . . the literature was almost based on anecdotes” (p. xiii). Indeed, much current termination literature focuses on analysts’