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Book Reviews

**The Healing Sun:
Sunlight and Health in the 21st Century**
by Richard Hobday
Findhorn Press
\$15.95
173 pages
ISBN: 1-899171-97-S

Sunlight generally gets a bad rap these days, but "sunlight therapy" has traditionally been employed as an effective treatment for a wide variety of ailments. As solar design engineer Richard Hobday points out, our current vilification of the sun only came into vogue in the latter portion of the 20th century. Hobday asks, "Did you know, for example, that sunlight kills bacteria and is quite capable of doing so even when it has passed through window glass?"

This scholarly yet spirited work combines historical data with current medical research in making the case that "your life could depend on" knowing about the positive effects of sunlight and sunbathing. "Sunlight may cause skin cancer," Hobday acknowledges, "but there is also evidence that it could prevent a number of very common and also fatal diseases: breast cancer; colon cancer; prostate cancer; ovarian cancer; heart disease; multiple sclerosis; and osteoporosis." Hobday proceeds to systematically detail the evidence for this claim. In addition, he devotes a careful chapter to "How to Sunbathe Safely." (Surprisingly, he counsels against sun screen lotion because "it is essential to obtain the full spectrum of sunlight.")

Hobday also provides informed discussions on such topics as indoor lighting, sea bathing, ozone depletion, and the relationship between sunlight and nutrition. Considering the amount of ground covered, this book is remarkably compact. Complete with extensive references and an index, this is a comprehensive argument worthy of serious study.

**This Child of Mine:
A Therapist's Journey**

by Martha Wakenshaw

Harbinger Press

ISBN 0-9674736-0-8

\$12.95

186 pages

No doubt you're aware that unspeakable things are happening to small children all over the world and even right in our midst. If, in some dark and uncomfortable place in your mind, you've ever wondered what actually becomes of children who are subject to radical neglect, abuse, beatings, rapes, and worse, then here's a report for you from the front lines.

Child therapist and former elementary school counselor Martha Wakenshaw brings us intimately into worlds of the unthinkable in her stories of the children she has known, and into whose lives she has attempted to deliver some semblance of tenderness. This is also Wakenshaw's own story, of a professional life in the public mental health services field ("The system for protecting children is inexact, imperfect, and in the end, everyone becomes a victim."), and of a personal life, raising two children of her own while negotiating her own anguish and her own nagging terrors. ("In working with my young clients, I have entered into their worlds so deeply that at times I have feared for my own sanity. . . . I have, literally, been brought to my knees in the face of unimaginable suffering and miraculous resiliency.")

Each child becomes, in some sense, Wakenshaw's own. As we read these eye-opening, soul-wrenching accounts, we may perceive that these are our children too. At the very least, this book will make us think twice before passing judgment on kids who exhibit socially unacceptable behavior, foul-mouthed teens who spew venomous hatred, or even maladjusted adults. At best, this book may open us to our own buried anguish, illuminate how the pain of the world is reflected in our own, and stimulate a fundamental desire to heal ourselves, each other, and our inexplicable world.