

availability of relationships but the subjective rating of adequacy that is important. The personality variable "neuroticism" is a much more powerful predictor than either of the social measures and it also is a determinant of adequacy of social relationships and adversity. Thus the measurement of social relationships has now paradoxically demanded a fuller understanding and better measurement of personality.

The book can be compared to that of Brown and Harris. Both have studied intensely certain aspects of the environment in relation to the development of neurotic illness. Both have provided a clear theoretical model that fits with their results but the present volume is somewhat more cautious in its claims. Whether it provokes so much critical comment remains to be seen. This book needs to be read by psychiatrists both for its research and its thoughtful analysis of the interaction between personality factors and current social situations.

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Physique and Delinquent Behaviour: A Thirty Year Follow-up of William H. Sheldon's Varieties of Delinquent Youth. By EMIL M. HARTL, EDWARD P. MONNELLY, ROLAND D. ELDERKIN. New York: Academic Press. 1983. Pp 586. \$49.50.

The search for an understanding of criminal behaviour has taken many routes and that which has sought to link behaviour with biological factors has the longest history. Early views on the stigma or atavism shown by criminals, have become refined through the last hundred years to the areas of differences in physiological and biochemical reactivity. One large area of concern along the way was concern over the relationship of body structure to behaviour. Although interest in this long predated Sheldon, his major contribution was to quantify and develop a reliable system for measuring body build and a typology based on the relative preponderance of ecto, endo and mesomorphy. His book, *Varieties of Delinquent Youth*, is then a classic and a landmark although, like many landmarks, more of historical than current practical significance.

This book represents an attempt to relate subsequent behaviour of the original cohort to body build as assessed at the time of original presentation (late adolescence). Follow-up data was collected at several stages in the intervening years so that the calibre of follow-up information is high. Two hundred individuals were traced, only 28 of whom were considered to have led anywhere near normal lifestyles and a further

41 one step down. These were the only groups to achieve reasonable later social adjustment. For the rest, eight different diagnostic categories were used.

The numbers within each sub-group are often very small making some of the sophisticated statistical analysis used questionable.

The bulk of the book (430 pages) is given over to presenting the case histories of each of the individuals, and one must question the value of this. It is unlikely that even the most avid reader will feel inclined to more than dip into this section: one would have thought that rather than being presented in a book form these histories could have been made available to those wanting them.

Although long term follow-up studies such as these are of continuing interest, presentation in book form does not seem justified, and even specialist libraries may find the price too high for them.

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Modern Problems of Pharmacopsychiatry. Vol. 19. Monoamine Oxidase and its Selective Inhibitors. Edited by HELMUT BECKMANN and PETER RIEDERER. Basel: S. Karger. 1983. Pp 350. SFr. 198, \$118.75.

This latest contribution to the literature on MAO consists of 31 papers from a satellite symposium of IBRO held in 1982. These cover clinical, pharmacological and biochemical aspects in about equal proportions. Until recently it was generally held that to be therapeutically effective, MAOI's must irreversibly inhibit the enzyme. The discovery of the two forms, A and B, of MAO has been partly responsible for a rethink. Thus an important idea which emerges from this book is that inhibitors which bind reversibly to MAO may be free of pressor effects because as tissue concentrations of dietary amines (e.g. tyramine) increase, they should displace the MAOI by competition, allowing the enzyme to act upon its substrate. As their concentration thereby falls, the inhibitor can re-occupy the enzyme. This theme is dealt with in several biochemical papers and there are also reports of studies using new reversible MAOI's in man, with details of their side-effects. The small number of subjects in some of the groups in these studies tempers somewhat the general conclusion that reversible inhibition of MAO produces a significantly reduced pressor response when compared with a conventional MAOI. Clearly, more work is urgently required in this interesting new area.