

from brain damage, the acquired dyslexias. Ellis follows current orthodoxy (which he is in part responsible for establishing) in relating disorders to models of unimpaired processing. That is, any disorder can be explained in terms of a disruption to a component of the intact model, rather than by the operation of processes that are not normally involved. This slant does not prevent alternative explanations from being discussed where appropriate, such as in the discussion of possible reading by the right hemisphere in deep dyslexia.

A brief chapter entitled "Words in combination" outlines how adults normally deal with more than one word at a time – which in conversation and reading text is very obviously the normal run of things. Although in such a brief overview it is impossible to do justice to all the research in this area, Ellis focuses upon the well-selected themes of memory and making inferences. Fortunately each chapter concludes with some useful and well-selected pointers to further reading.

Writing and spelling are covered next. If words in combination have received disproportionately less attention in the literature than words in isolation, the imbalance between input and output in language processes is even more striking. Ellis's book goes some way to redressing this imbalance.

It is good to see the chapter on developmental dyslexia maintained and updated. In teaching I have found this to be the best discussion available for undergraduates. There is also a useful chapter on learning to read and write.

Although processing written language is clearly a self-contained, respectable topic there are few introductory books to rival this which cover the whole of the area. All technical terms are clearly defined, and the book makes use of several clear diagrams that enhance the textual explanations. Although short, it isolates the major themes and topics of current interest in the psychology of processing written language, and summarises contemporary research in a clear way. It is also a ripping good read for us all.

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Psychopathic and Antisocial Personality Disorders. Treatment and Research Issues. By BRIDGET DOLAN and JEREMY COID. London: Gaskell/Royal College of Psychiatrists. 1994. 323 pp. £20.00 (pb).

When one describes a book as encyclopaedic, it is usually a reference to its inconvenient size and great weight rather than to its content, but this book, which has none of the former qualities, is truly encyclopaedic in its comprehensive and discerningly analytic coverage of the topic. Psychopathic disorder has received more informed attention in the past decade than

previously, when it was dismissed as no more than an epithet. There have always been those who have viewed psychopathy and personality disorder with both interest and concern, and current trends in society indicate that the treatment or management of personality disorder is becoming an increasingly important issue for mental health workers. The Dolan and Coid book draws together virtually all that has been written on the subject and puts opinions, research findings and outcome studies in perspective with unbiased commentary. What is so gratifying about the book is that previous works are not simply alluded to, leaving the reader to search out the original, but the relevant features of the work under review are summarised and critically appraised for us on the page.

While diagnostic attitudes receive due attention and are sharpened up in the final recommendations, all the therapeutic approaches are reviewed with some surprising revelations. The book concludes with an overall summary (although each chapter is summarised conveniently for the reader) and suggestions for future research. The required discipline and methodology for such research, and indeed for appropriate treatment, is outlined with clinical examples of how an appraisal of a case should be made based on allocating the case to one or other recognised diagnostic categories of personality disorder, elucidating the clinical syndrome and defining the type of behavioural disorder. The authors make the point that "the untreatability of psychopaths may in part result from the professional's inadequate assessment . . ." and ". . . it cannot be said that the psychopath is untreatable until we are satisfied that all possible treatment interventions have been tried, adequately evaluated and then shown to fail."

Finally, do not judge a book by the space the *Journal* editors allot the reviewer! This is without doubt the best overview of a difficult but most important and fascinating topic that I have yet encountered. Highly recommended for the individual reader, it is essential as a source book for any psychiatric, sociology or criminology library.

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The Neuropsychology of Schizophrenia. Edited by ANTHONY DAVID and JOHN CUTTING. Hove: Lawrence Erlbaum. 1994. 406 pp. £34.95 (hb).

In 1991 the Institute of Psychiatry hosted an international conference on the neuropsychology of schizophrenia. This is the book, and the latest addition to the series "Brain Damage, Behaviour and Cognition". Conference proceedings are not always an enticing read, but this publication shows that a successful conference can produce a stimulating book.

Collectively its chapters (by both psychiatrists and psychologists) provide a wealth of information and