

The book has been well produced with a minimum of delay. It is a pity, however, that the editors have left out the discussion, as this is often the most valuable part of symposia of this type. Workers in geriatric psychiatry will find this book well worth reading.

J. STERN.

Research and Report Writing in the Behavioural Sciences. By ROBERT L. NOLAND. Charles C. Thomas. Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A. Pp. 98. Price \$6.50.

The advice given in this book is intended for an American student who has been given an assignment as part of his university course to choose some subject within the range of the behavioural sciences, review the literature on it, and present his findings in a paper. Experimental research is excluded from consideration. The advice is of a very simple kind: in selecting a suitable topic it warns him against choosing one which is too large and ill-defined; in consulting the literature, to avoid being diverted from his subject and only to skim through publications if he finds their interest is meagre or tangential; in drafting the paper, to adopt a truly professional layout—title, list of contents, chapter headings, footnotes and all. Nearly a third of the book is occupied by lists of references where the readers can find further guidance through all three stages. Postgraduate students preparing dissertations or theses for higher degrees in Britain may find it will help them too, in getting through the tedious, disappointing task of reviewing the literature.

What a pity that the book is written in such atrocious gobbledegook: 'If the submission of a paper is an absolute requirement for the passage of the course', for example. It cannot be read, like Gibbon, for the sheer enjoyment of the literary style. Anyone who thinks he may need to consult it should apply the author's appropriate advice: turn it up in the library, skim through it (10 minutes maximum) and then make a snap decision whether he will ever want to refer to it again.

P. SLATER.

Freedom in a Rocking Boat. Changing Values in an Unstable Society. By GEOFFREY VICKERS. London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press. Pp. 215. 1970. Price £2.50.

The author who was for many years a member both of the Medical Research Council and of the Mental Health Research Fund, here continues his analysis of human social systems. He begins by recalling that in his youth he travelled across European frontiers which asked no passport. The hope was the imminence of the unity of mankind. Today the world is full of people dedicated to revolutionary conflict and the overthrow of authority. The causes of the failure of the liberal hope are examined in terms of the regulators which political systems need to encompass change without disintegrating. The 'scientific distortion' is not to realize that human life consists in experiencing relations, an aesthetic rather than a goal-seeking activity. Freedom in the post-liberal era may rest on the hope that increasingly alarming experiences of man-made disasters will (if not irremediable) eventually convince ordinary people of the need to accept restraints which would have seemed outrageous before—a partnership of the governors and the governed.

D. W. K. KAY.

Volunteers in Prison After-Care. By HUGH BARR. George Allen and Unwin. 1971. Pp. 167. Price £2.75.

This report describes a pilot scheme for enlisting voluntary workers to collaborate with probation officers in helping ex-prisoners. Recruitment was not difficult, but judicious selection of candidates, and a preparatory training course, were found to be essential. Initial doubts by the professionals about entrusting their clients to lay workers had to be overcome. Most of the volunteers were much more middle class in origin and outlook than the clients, but this did not seem as great a hindrance as might have been expected. Not being burdened with large case-loads, or committed to an official approach, the volunteers could introduce prisoners to their homes and friends and invite them to join in leisure pursuits, and be at hand in moments of need. That some lonely and socially rejected clients derived comfort there can be no doubt, but it is neither claimed nor is it known whether this decreased their chances of reconviction.

D. J. WEST.