

This volume is intended for a more general audience and will be suitable not only for students in the early part of their medical training but for students of neuropsychology, sociology, and related disciplines. Indeed, there is much in the book which can be read with profit by experienced psychiatrists and other clinicians. Dr Nathan's wide ranging interests in the normal and abnormal nervous system are clearly shown in the examples taken from his own clinical experience, used in the book to bring home points of particular importance. The scope is ambitious, embracing the whole range of normal and abnormal function of the nervous system of man, and the attempt is a great success. The book begins with an account of sensory receptors and of the neural basis of the brain's capacity to examine the external world, including a succinct and simple account of nerves and nerve conduction, of neuro-transmitters and hormones. Concepts of the control of voluntary movement are discussed in a separate chapter and there are excellent discussions of pain, learning and memory, speech, and personality. The book concludes with a glossary which will be useful to students approaching this subject for the first time. The text is particularly clearly argued when difficult subjects, such as the ionic basis of nerve conduction, or new ideas on pain, are tackled. This book provides a wonderfully fresh and original account of the nervous system and its function in health and disease.

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Abnormal Psychology: An Experimental Clinical Approach. Third Edition. By GERALD C. DAVISON and JOHN M. NEALE. Chichester: John Wiley. 1982. Pp 823. £15.95.

Case Studies in Abnormal Psychology. By JOHN M. NEALE, THOMAS F. OLTMANN and GERALD C. DAVISON. Chichester: John Wiley. 1982. Pp 316. £7.35.

Of the illustrated text books which attempt an informed, accurate summary of the field of abnormal psychology Davison and Neale's has, for some years, been one of the best available. Extensive updating and rewriting of many sections brings their new edition in line with recent developments. The authors have continued their comparison of psychoanalytic and behaviour therapies but widen their discussion to give more space to humanistic, existential and cognitive approaches. Although there is emphasis on the new American *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM III), the authors are not uncritical of this system of diagnostic classification.

One particularly important change is that chapters on specific disorders now describe treatment

approaches. Another major addition is a large new section on developmental disorders. The last part of this section deals extensively and comprehensively with the rarely described clinical problems of aging.

Case Studies in Abnormal Psychology presents a detailed analysis of eighteen patients. The volume is designed for all students of abnormal psychology and for practical courses teaching the best ways of conceptualizing and treating psychological problems. Apart from supplementing the standard text book it provides a genuine sense of what it is like to work as a therapist with psychiatric patients. Each case study concludes with a summary of the different theoretical models used to interpret the abnormal behaviour.

The descriptions of treatment emphasise the importance of a team approach which can draw appropriately on various means of intervention.

For anyone studying or working in the field of abnormal psychology both volumes are highly recommended.

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Drinking and Crime. Edited by JAMES J. COLLINS JR. London: Tavistock. 1981. Pp 356. £20.00.

This book should be a salutary experience to those who feel the relationship between alcohol and crime is a simple positive one. This reader certainly had any such naive thoughts shattered within the first few pages.

The all-American contributors are from various disciplines including criminology, sociology and psychology and all are painstaking and thorough in their attempt to clarify the difficult and important issues. The variety of contributions affords a good balance to the book as a whole, and to the information presented, and assure the book a wide readership.

The evidence of a relationship between alcohol and violent crime is substantial, statistical studies from various countries indicating that 50–60 per cent of homicides and 35–72 per cent of rapes are committed under the influence of alcohol. In property crimes, on the other hand, alcohol is only a factor in 30 to 40 per cent.

Various aspects of these statistics are explored. Is the crime committed because of the alcohol, or does it merely provide the courage to execute it? Is the individual perpetually under the influence of drink and the crime then committed incidentally, or could drink be an acceptable excuse for antisocial behaviour? The inevitable problem with most of the studies is that they deal with the population apprehended for crimes, and are perhaps, not representative of the whole criminal population.

Various contributors deal with the physiological,