

extensively from at least each of sections I, III, IV and VII and VIII as well if their patient is not of majority. This seems a book primarily for senior practitioners.

Overall this is not a text for reading, although individual chapters will bring their own reward. It should be a useful source book. Ironically, as a textbook of forensic psychiatry edited by psychiatrists, it is the sections on law that are strongest. This is true even of the sections on child and adolescent law, which suffer an inevitable problem in a ever-changing field: that they had to anticipate the 1989 Children's Act through preceding bills rather than document the Act *per se*. I will certainly dip into the book and use the reference list. Should each have their own copy? That depends on how you want to spend the next £150!

PAMELA J. TAYLOR, *Head of Medical Services, Honorary Senior Lecturer, Institute of Psychiatry, London*

**Confidence Interval Analysis: Manual and Disk.** Edited by MARTIN J. GARDNER, STEPHEN B. GARDNER and PAUL WINTER. London: BMJ. 1989. 77 pp & disk. £65 or £45 NHS.

Statisticians are often heard to complain about the over-emphasis placed on significance testing by researchers in medicine and related disciplines, which frequently results in the literature of these subjects being liberally scattered with *P* values or 'stars' to indicate particular significance levels. In recent years such complaints have been taken to heart by editors of journals such as the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet*, who now expect scientific papers submitted to them to contain, where appropriate, confidence intervals rather than simply the presentation of a *P* value from a hypothesis testing procedure. This change of emphasis is to be applauded since in medical studies investigators *should* usually be interested in determining, for example, the size of difference of a measured outcome between groups, rather than a simple indication of whether or not it is statistically significant. Confidence intervals present a range of values, on the basis of the sample data, in which the population value for such a difference may lie.

The computer program Confidence Interval Analysis (CIA), designed for IBM-compatible microcomputers, should encourage the change from significance testing to the calculation of confidence intervals, since it is extremely easy to use even for that ubiquitous character, the research worker who is naive where statistics are concerned. The CIA is menu driven and can be used to provide confidence intervals for means, regression slopes, odds ratios, hazard functions, etc. Either raw data or summary statistics may be entered into CIA and the options of 90, 95 or 99 per cent confidence intervals

are provided. Data entry and error correcting are straightforward, and warnings are given when the confidence interval method chosen is inappropriate, for example, because of small sample sizes.

The program is meant to be used with the associated book, *Statistics With Confidence*, and together they should certainly provide the medical researcher with the tools needed to calculate confidence intervals in many circumstances of interest. In the long run this will, hopefully, lead to a further decline in those tables in medical journals which are so covered with 'stars' that they resemble a hotel guide book.

B. S. EVERITT, *Professor of Behavioural Statistics, Biometrics Unit, Institute of Psychiatry, London*

**Hospital Closure.** By NANCY CORMAN and HOWARD GLENNERSTER. Milton Keynes: Open University Press. 1990. 173 pp. £9.99.

This book details the administrative, financial and political issues involved in the closure of Darenth Park Hospital, a large mental-handicap hospital which served almost half of the South-East Thames region. It makes interesting reading, possibly because the method resembles investigative journalism, albeit in a minor key.

The closure occupied the major part of the last decade. In this respect the book represents a splendid obituary for a style of managing affairs that already seems forgotten. For this reason it has an historical importance but not necessarily much relevance for the 'great leap forward' we are now embarked upon.

The clinical issues arising are dealt with in *Hospital Closure and the Resettlement of Residents* by Lorna Wing (1989, London: Gower Publishing).

GREG WILKINSON, *Director, Academic Sub-Department of Psychological Medicine in North Wales, North Wales Hospital, Denbigh, Clwyd*

**When One Wants Out and The Other Doesn't: Doing Therapy with Polarised Couples.** Edited by JOHN F. CROSBY. New York: Brunner/Mazel. 1989. 240 pp. \$41.00.

The type of marriages focused on in this collection of 12 clinical essays are accurately referred to by the editor as "polarised marriages": those couples who present with one partner wanting to finish the relationship and the other wishing to continue it. The editor describes these as "non-pathological marriages", suggesting that they may have become "devitalised" and contrasting such couples with those who might present for help with a