

Award with this book, so perhaps the word humanist now means someone who would solve human problems with death.

From the outset the elderly and dying are referred to as a 'burden', some living a life with no significance 'long after mind and spirit have ceased to exist'. A daring assumption. The receiver's contribution to service is overlooked.

Euthanasia is called 'death with dignity'. But if you kill someone because he is in pain, you only ensure that he dies in pain. Wherein is this dignified? Throughout the book it is assumed that death alone could solve the uncommon problem of intractable physical or mental suffering. In down to earth clinical practice, one does of course sometimes offer the patient the alternative of heavy sedation. In my experience even that is usually declined. Nowhere is it perceived that the request for euthanasia is a cry for help. Instead we find such sinister phrases as 'old people who had outlived their usefulness to society' and the whole concept of cost economics is applied to people. Inevitably one asks whether there aren't many other people who give no 'useful services' to society? And sure enough they are here too. In chapter 3 are references to idiots and imbeciles being put down, and later there is a sudden switch to advocacy of selected infanticide (p. 178).

A spine chilling book.

RICHARD LAMERTON  
*St. Joseph's Hospice, London*

**Psychopathology: Experimental Models.** Edited by JACK D. MASER and MARTIN E. P. SELIGMAN. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman. 1977. Pp 474. \$17.95, \$8.95 (paperback).

This is a comprehensive collection of essays describing experimental models which have been considered analogous to mental disorders. The authors' use of the word psychopathology in the title implies that the behaviour described has biological or social disadvantages; there is no attempt to detail the precise nature of complaints or to describe the state of mind. Most of the data on which the models are developed come from non-human species.

Ten forms of pathological behaviour are discussed with, in all twelve different models; obesity, addiction, depression, phobias and obsessions, neurosis, psychosomatic disorders, minimal brain dysfunction, catatonia, schizophrenia and 'sexual diversity'. For each model there is a detailed discussion of the experimental work and a rather less convincing

exposition of its relevance to and associations with the clinical field to which it is linked. The authors of these chapters are well known researchers and as a summary of their different viewpoints this work is excellent. The bibliography contains about 1000 references and this also makes it a valuable work for psychiatrists seeking up-to-date information on the opinions of behavioural and experimental psychology relevant to their subject. It is a collection of articles by different authors and suffers therefore from a multiplicity of goals and orientations. The psychiatric reader is still left with the feeling that the clothes that fit the model do not really fit the patient.

ANDREW SIMS, *Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, The University of Birmingham*

**Society, Stress and Disease: Volume 3: The Productive and Reproductive Age.** Edited by LENNART LEVI. Oxford: Oxford Medical Publications. 1978. Pp 295. £14.00.

**Stress at Work.** Edited by C. L. COOPER and R. PAYNE. Chichester: John Wiley. 1978. Pp 293. £9.75.

Books of collected papers devoted to aspects of stress can be expected to be of uneven quality and to repeatedly demonstrate the problems of definition and of methodology. The value of these two books can perhaps best be judged by the extent to which they survey their fields and provide critical summaries for the non-specialist. The first larger work, based on a symposium which took place several years ago is very varied, containing 37 reports ranging from hormone metabolism to accounts of sex education.

In the title, *Reproductive Age*, does not as might be assumed, refer to reproduction itself (there is no mention of pregnancy, puerperal problems or sterilization) but to sexual roles and relationships and their pathology. It has some value as a source book of information and attitudes, but much of the content is of little more than ephemeral interest.

*Stress at Work* is more interesting, both because of its tighter editorial control and because it brings together evidence which is less readily available to psychiatrists. Intended for a wide audience, the discussion of lighting, chemical and other hazards will not be of relevance, but it does cover much that is useful about psychological stresses. The limitations of much of the research discussed are considerable but the book as a whole summarizes, usually comprehensibly, current thinking about the nature of stress and the ways in which it may be reduced.

RICHARD MAYOU, *Clinical Reader, University Department of Psychiatry, Oxford*