because of the extreme complexity of the interviewing process. In a wide ranging review of the scientific background to this problem, Dr. Freeman exposes some of the difficulties which have bedeviled those who have intruded into this field since the early decades of this century. A chapter on environmental factors in aggressive behaviour may seem a little surprising to the more specialist reader. Its author, zoologist Dr. Paul Brain, is conscious of the impact on a more general readership of publications in the field of popular biology which debate upon this topic. Dr. Brain's review reflects the fact that this is not a simple subject and that terms like "aggression" and "the environment" are used in different ways by different writers and suggests that one should attempt to distinguish subdivisions within these concepts. There are two related chapters: one on urban delinquency, in which Bagley reports some new previously unpublished findings, which suggest that neighbourhood and family and not school differences are important, and a chapter on urban overgrowth which explores some of the explanations which have been suggested for high crime rates in large cities. The possibility that large urban areas induce a sense of anonymity not seen in small communities is discussed in detail, although strikingly little evidence on this as an explanation for high crime rates appears to be available.

The first two sections of this volume deal with general scientific issues and specific topics. The last section, something of a novelty, consists of a number of case studies. It includes a thorough analysis, by means of geographical methods, of psychiatric admission rates for depression and schizophrenia in the city of Plymouth, focusing on differences between electoral wards and at a more refined level, examining specific categories of residential environments. Much of this last section of the book contains new as well as recently published data.

Most of the contributors to this volume are interested in both effects and causes in relation to the environment and mental health. The overall impression is discouraging: I had hoped to find that research on the wider and larger structural and social environment would be less technically fraught than similar more familiar work at the micro-social level, studying the stressful life events, social supports and social networks of representative individuals. I was also disappointed to find that, in spite of the availability for a decade now of technically satisfactory measures of psychiatric morbidity, the literature covered in this volume is based on earlier, imprecise and often

difficult-to-interpret measures. However, most of the contributors are cautious and the unwary reader is far less likely to be led astray by this work, comparing well as it does with more popular, less technical and briefer sources. This book can be recommended as a useful source for scholars who may wish to embark on further research in a very difficult area. For the practitioner who wants answers to questions about the cause of mental illness and its more effective social management, this work only lends weight to the view that there is much to be done in order to improve the positive qualities of our living environment, and beyond that very little that can be said at the moment about the effective prevention or care of mental ill health.

TRAOLACH S BRUGHA

The Epilepsies. *BIMR Neurology Series-Vol 5.* Edited by Roger J Porter and Paolo L Morselli. (Pp 395; £36.00.) Sevenoaks: The Butterworth Group, 1985.

Epilepsy has for long been seen as a Cinderella sub-speciality of neurology. Over recent years there has, however, been an enormous increase in interest and research into this area. This is now being reflected in a more critical appraisal of our management of epilepsy, the introduction of new technologies to the investigation of patients, and most recently, after a decade of neglect, the development of new potential antiepileptic drugs. Along with this has come a veritable host of new books on epilepsy. This is the latest in a series of *Butterworth International Medical Reviews* covering neurological topics. As previous books in this series it is edited jointly by an American, Professor Roger Porter and a European, Dr Paulo Morselli. It is a multi-author book which is comprehensive in its coverage. Initial chapters deal with basic biochemical, neurotransmitter, and neurophysiological aspects of seizures. These are followed by chapters on the epidemiology and classification of the epilepsies. There are chapters on the values of a variety of investigations in epilepsy both those that have been with us for many years (the EEG), and newer techniques such as positron emission tomography. Therapeutic aspects are dealt with in a number of chapters relating to pharmacology and surgery as are psychosocial problems associated with epilepsy.

Readers will find this an excellent summary of the field that represents a state of the art view. Chapters inevitably vary a little in their coverage and European readers will once again be struck by what they might

regard as unusual preferences for particular forms of drug therapy, for example primidone and phenobarbitone for partial and tonic clonic seizures. However, overall it is difficult to be critical of this book which represents excellent value for money. It will be of interest and value to anyone charged with the care of patients with epilepsy.

DW CHADWICK

Brain Imaging and Brain Function. (Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease [ARNMD], Research Publications, Vol. 63.) Edited by Louis Sokoloff. (Pp 320; \$70.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1985.

This is volume 63 in that excellent series published on behalf of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease and, although too expensive for personal purchase, is a delight to read and study. The three introductory chapters by Kety, Lassen and Sokoloff trace the history of the development of the principles on which the measurement of regional cerebral blood flow and metabolism is based. Extensive mathematical modelling often makes the literature of positron emission tomography impenetrable to the clinician but this book lucidly explains the principles without the reader being unduly burdened with equations. The low-key, rigorous scholarship with which Sokoloff rebuffs critics of the deoxyglucose technique for the measurement of cerebral glucose utilisation makes absorbing reading. The elegance with which this technique can be used to explore the physiology of the visual, motor and sensory pathways and cognitive function in man is beautifully demonstrated and the care with which data should be interpreted in pathological states such as epilepsy, tumours, ischaemia and various forms of dementia is explored in the succeeding chapters. The chapter from the Hammersmith Group on the pathophysiology of human cerebral ischaemia, written by Frackowiak, is a gem and provides the theoretical justification for studies taking place in other centres using much cheaper, simpler bed-side techniques in patients being considered for carotid endarterectomy, extracranial/intracranial bypass and clipping of aneurysms. Positron emission tomography has often been criticised for being too expensive, too anecdotal and short on fresh insight. This volume demonstrates how positron emission tomography is, at long last, fulfilling its early promise.

Finally, there are three well-written chapters

ters on various aspects of magnetic resonance imaging including chemical shift imaging. The only problem with this book, as with PET, is its price.

JD PICKARD

Lecture Notes on Neurology, 6th ed. By Ivan T Draper. (Pp 209; £7.50.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1985.

This paperback was first published in 1965 and its age is beginning to show. In any book reprinted and revised over 21 years, defects are likely to become evident, particularly in a specialty such as neurology, where advances in therapeutics, and imaging techniques have been so dramatic. Likewise, the emphasis in a textbook written twenty years ago was different from what would be considered important now. But, even in 1965, it is hard to believe that neurosyphilis justified four pages in a book of 217 pages; whereas the chapter devoted to the whole subject of vertigo is barely 1½ pages long.

The accounts given of various conditions tend to include in a single section, the description not only of the clinical features, but also the pathology. This detracts from the clarity of the description and is unlikely to help the undergraduate student. Similarly, the description of cerebrovascular disease fails to clearly distinguish persisting from transient cerebral ischaemia, and the sections on treatment fail to give details of pharmacokinetics, (for example of anti-convulsants or anti-Parkinsonian drugs). This information is, surely, essential in the management. One occasionally comes across relatively opaque statements such as "Selegiline reduces the disabilities which lessen the effectiveness of long term levodopa".

There is little guidance as to the indications for different methods of imaging or investigation. Computed tomography is only mentioned specifically in six lines of text, with the concluding remark "Now becoming more widely available...." Magnetic resonance imaging is not mentioned.

The book is designed for undergraduate teaching and the first parts achieve this aim with a well written and concise description of neurological anatomy, physiology, clinical history and examination. I would have liked a much more detailed revision of the section devoted to describing diseases of the nervous system. There are more readable and satisfactory texts available.

RB GODWIN-AUSTEN

Understanding Brain Damage. A primer of neuropsychological evaluation. By Kevin W Walsh. (Pp 243; £17.00.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

Kevin Walsh's new book represents both an extension and a departure from his previous excellent survey of neuropsychological knowledge. Whereas the previous book was concerned to identify and structure our knowledge of brain behaviour relationships, the new book is an attempt to put this knowledge firmly into clinical practice. The attempt has succeeded magnificently.

The book begins with a statement of philosophy, and then deals in detail with a variety of clinical conditions which commonly present in a neuropsychological clinic (for example, alcohol related brain damage, intellectual decline, pseudo neurological disorders, head injury, and cerebrovascular disease). For each condition, the author gives a brief but informative account of relevant pathophysiological and neuropsychological information, and then describes a series of clinical cases, giving very considerable information about their neuropsychological assessment. The philosophy of assessment is one that relies on a detailed focused history; a brief neuropsychological examination, and a clinically informed interpretation of the test results. The approach is one that the reviewer favours, but those who like exhaustive test batteries, and detailed microanalysis of every possible psychological function will be surprised at the apparent brevity of the examinations carried out. The brevity is, however, combined with focused clarity, and it is a very pragmatic yet clinically appropriate model of practice.

The book is excellent, and at £17.00 it is a bargain.

DN BROOKS

Recent Advances in the Management of Pain. (Advances in Pain Research and Therapy, Volume 7.) Edited by Constantino Benedetti, C Richard Chapman and Guido Moricca. (Pp 712; \$105.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1984.

The *Advances in Pain Research and Therapy* series, sponsored by the International Association for the Study of Pain, includes the proceedings of the triennial world congresses and other volumes from smaller symposia. These books have proved very useful sources, but this recent addition to the series is the least successful. This is partly

because it appears that an undertaking has been given to all the participants in the symposium to publish their contributions, of variable scientific standard, and partly because the book embraces much more than pain management, with several chapters on other topics including, amongst others, pain mechanisms (very well covered in the recent volume 6 of this series), measurement of pain, and chronic pain with depression. Though many of these chapters are excellent, they unnecessarily lengthen an already large and expensive volume. It is surely not intended that each volume of the series should attempt to be a complete textbook of pain, and more editorial thought might have been given to this problem.

In the first section, on basic considerations, Wall has written a stimulating review of the neurophysiology of acute and chronic pain. Particularly important is his challenge of the validity of currently widely used tests for pain in animal experiments. He argues persuasively that most of these tests are not measurements of chronic pain at all, and it is a sobering thought that conclusions drawn from the results of such tests form the basis of many of our present concepts of acute and chronic pain. In a section on pharmacological treatment, Butler reviews the present status of tricyclic antidepressants in chronic pain, in a wide range of conditions including headache, facial pain, arthritis, denervation states, low back pain and cancer. Reported results are generally favourable, but as with so many other pain treatments, there is a dearth of properly controlled clinical trials. Fraioli and colleagues contribute to the interesting recent literature on the analgesic action of calcitonin; its place in treatment of chronic pain remains uncertain. In a section dealing with other modalities and approaches, Murphy and Anderson describe a multidisciplinary approach to chronic pain management, as used in the Seattle pain clinic. Pain clinics in Britain are mostly not run along these lines and this chapter makes interesting reading. While the patient may benefit from the combined expertise of such clinics, treatment "by committee" requires a strong chairman to direct management and take overall clinical responsibility, and it should not be assumed that patients will always be best managed in this way.

The largest section in the book, entitled pain and pain syndromes, includes a number of interesting chapters. Benedetti *et al* address the continuing important problem of post-operative pain. An extensive review of the duration and severity of pain following different operations is followed by a con-