divided into sections which have a central theme of a particular neurotransmitter or regulator—for example, catecholamines, indoleamines, hormones, and peptides. In general each contributor reiterates his own view of his particular subject and often, as an afterthought, its possible relevance to psychiatric illness. A notable exception is the contribution by Bloom which clarifies the potential role of the noradrenergic system in brain. A plethora of other compounds are discussed almost all of which are given a role in the genesis of schizophrenia. If then, the hypotheses are not taken too seriously, the general data given in the book are extremely comprehensive and serve as a good reference source in this field.

DONALD ECCLESTON

Foundations of Biochemical Psychiatry

By D. S. Segal, J. Yager, and J. L. Sullivan. (Pp. xii+346; illustrated; £12.50.) Butterworths: London. 1977. This book deals with the biochemistry of psychiatric disorders, with special emphasis on schizophrenia and disorders of mood. There are also sections on neurosis, alcoholism, and the hyper-reactive child, with a final section on psychoendocrinology. Each section consists of an introductory commentary followed by reprints of important original papers, most of which are well chosen. The most recent advances cannot be included in a work of this kind, but it serves as an excellent source book of current knowledge in a very important field. The book can be warmly recommended and should be in every psychiatric library.

J. L. GIBBONS

Phenomenology and Treatment of Depression

Edited by W. E. Fann, I. Karacan, A. D. Pokorny, and R. L. Williams. (Pp. 350; £15.00.) SP Medical and Scientific Books: London. 1977. Some books are born with titles (Middlemarch), some achieve titles (Gray's Anatomy), and some have titles thrust upon them. The editors of this volume have thrust into the Procrustean bed of Phenomenology such diverse chapters as Patterns of Pituitary Responses, Life Events, and Iatrogenic Depression in Women, and this broader American

concept of phenomenology is only one aspect of the book's transatlantic weighting.

As with many proceedings of symposia, the contents are of varied style and content ranging from personal research (Kaplan on Gender and Depression) to selective reviews (White on Current Psychoanalytic Concepts), and from anecdotal to more rigid psychological approaches (Bruch on Adolescent Eating Disorders and Zung on Operational Diagnosis and Diagnostic Categories).

At £15 the book is not sufficiently original and stimulating to be recommended unreservedly. Anyone contemplating buying it would find a half hour library browse a very necessary preliminary.

CRAIGIE MACFIE

The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness

By Erich Fromm. (Pp. 679; £1.50.) Penguin Books: Harmondsworth. 1977.

In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* Erich Fromm considers the origins of human aggression. He reviews previous work on the subject, and, in particular, critically examines the theories proposed by the instinctivists and the behaviourists. In doing so he draws on a wide range of scientific knowledge which he uses to show, in a logical and lucid way, that neither of these approaches adequately explains the kind of aggressive behaviour peculiar to man.

Fromm himself separates aggression into two types: benign aggression which is defensive and life-preserving, and malignant aggression which is cruel, purposeless, and destructive. The former, he states, is common to all animals while the latter is found only in man. He goes on to consider those aspects of society which have led to the development of the sadistic character in man.

While his theories are thought-provoking and the character analyses he uses to illustrate them fascinating, the book contains very little scientific data to justify Fromm's statements. This is especially disappointing since he uses a wealth of scientific material to invalidate previous theories.

MARGARET R. MALCOLM

Notices

The Volvo Awards for Low Back Pain Research

In order to encourage research in the low back pain field, the Volvo company of Göteborg, Sweden, has generously sponsored three prizes of US \$3000 each for a scientific competition in the following three areas:

1. Clinical studies including epidemiology and treatment.
2. Studies in the bioengineering field relevant to the problem of low back pain.
3. Work in the basic scientific area aimed at clarifying the mechanisms of low back pain.

Papers submitted for the contest must contain original not previously published material by one or several authors, who should prepare the manuscript in a form suitable for publication in *The Spine* (Harper & Row). Deadline for submission of papers is 1 January 1979.

One of the authors should be prepared to come to Göteborg at the time of the meeting of the International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine from 29 May to 2 June 1979 to present the paper and to receive the prize.

The board of referees will be chaired by Professor Nachemson and will contain members from the fields of clinical medicine, bioengineering, and biochemistry. Please direct all correspondence to: Professor Alf Nachemson, Vice-President, International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery I, University of Göteborg, Sahlgren Hospital, S-413 45 Göteborg, Sweden.

The Sixth Annual Meeting of the International Society for Paediatric Neurosurgery

will be held in Jerusalem, Israel from 25 to 27 September 1978. Dr Abraham Sahar is the President of the Congress and the Meeting's Secretary will be Dr Moshe Feinsod (Mayer Rothschild), Hadassah University Hospital, Kyriat Hadassah, Jerusalem.