The two volumes on brain tumours in Karger's prestigious series of Progress in Experimental Tumor Research are devoted to biology and therapy. The first volume edited by ML Rosenblum and CB Wilson of the Brain Tumor Research Center, San Francisco, covers miscellaneous subjects of carcinogenesis, pathology and physiology. The molecular aspects of tumour induction and the possible relevance of DNA damage and repair in chemical carcinogenesis are reviewed by Kleihues and Rajewsky; their chapter was written at the time when the first papers on oncogenes were published and consequently, this exciting development in the understanding of the molecular basis of malignancy could not be adequately covered. The multi-stage process of carcinogenesis in the brain is followed by Laerum, Mork and de Ridder from initiation to the appearance of overt malignancy: the correlated in vivo and in vitro investigations have provided an excellent experimental approach.

With the introduction of electron microscopy, immunohistochemistry, tissue culture and cytogenetics, the phenotypic and genotypic heterogeneity of brain tumours has been increasingly realised. The cellular pleomorphism which may exist even within the same neoplasm can result from diverging processes of differentiation and ana.

P. JENNEN


This book is primarily aimed at undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students, including clinical psychology students. Although it purports to address both abnormal and clinical psychology, the coverage is very uneven. About four-fifths of the book deals with psychological and psychiatric theories, classification and assessment, with only the final fifth devoted specifically to psychological treatment.

There is much that is unsatisfactory. Firstly, there are a number of startling errors. For example, it is held that the statistical model of abnormality "...is now frequently used in defining the intellectually subnormal." (p.2), and incest "...between brother and sister in childhood and adolescence is the most common." (p.35). Secondly, the uneveness of the treatment has led to certain areas being inadequately covered, the clearest instance being that only five pages are specifically about childhood disturbances. Thirdly, the material is presented in a poorly organised and unsystematic fashion—the very first paragraph of the chapter on organic disorders discusses toxic causes. Finally, the approach to the subject matter has an old-fashioned air. For example, mental handicap is discussed in outdated terminology such as subnormality and many of the more recent developments in clinical psychology, such as personal construct theory and cognitive-behavioural treatment, receive only the most cursory of mentions. It is perhaps indicative of this datedness that only 13% of the references cited are less than five years old; in more up-to-date books the proportion is usually 25% or more. In short, because of its many and serious shortcomings, this book cannot be recommended.

T. TRAUER