a good chapter on the present status of evoked potentials in aging and dementia. This section is weak on somatosensory evoked potentials, and spinal evoked potentials. If these had been included instead of some of the more repetitious chapters relating to visual evoked responses, this would have made a formidable section.

Section 2 deals with slow wave phenomena and gives a rather poor and idiosyncratic view of present day slow wave research. Although one chapter summarises the present position as regards the CNV and psychiatric states, with a further chapter on brain DC potentials, the section does not deal with the very large literature and theory underlying P300 or other CNV work. This is a serious omission, which weakens the section.

Section 3 takes a broad overview of some aspects of the cutting edge of EEG analysis. As this is such a wide field, it is a question of editorial choice, and the selection that the editors have made is relevant to the rest of the book. For example, there is a good chapter on the validity of EEG and alpha symmetry by Butler and Glass, and a good review chapter of quantitative EEG methods in human neuropsychopharmacology.

Section 4 deals with autonomic and skeletal-motor activity. This is an area which is usually sadly neglected in textbooks of psychophysiology. The section is opened by Levy, Martin and co-workers, in an excellent chapter on their theory of differential conditioning as a basis for psychophysiological disorders. The section proceeds through a description of the use of the polygraph as a lie detector, and a section by Randy Katz on understanding how the predictability of a stimulus affects the stress that is produced. There is then a comprehensive coverage of GSR, EMG, and the electrocardiogram in psychophysiological research.

The final section, on interdisciplinary study, is a lucky dip by the editors into the current tab of the more exciting aspects of psychophysiological research. All choice must be idiosyncratic, and their choices certainly reflect this. There is a good article by Wastell on the basic assumptions underlying the event related potential, which takes us to task for the naive view that most of us have shared to date. There is also a good description of contemporary models of human information processing, using the techniques of psychophysiology. I was pleased to see that magnetoencephalography is at long last given some mention, although this article is only an introductory one and already outdated. The mandatory article by Gruzeli and co-workers on hemisphere asymmetries in schizophrenia is of course also included.

Who should buy this book? Clearly, it should be on every library shelf, as a current statement of the present state of neuropsychophysiology. Those who have access to departmental grants would be well advised to buy a copy for their own departmental bookshelves. Certainly it should be available to those of us who are involved in teaching, and I would even agree with the editors when they suggest that it might be given to final year undergraduate students (though I feel only the brightest ones are likely to get much out of it). As an enthusiastic brain researcher, should you put your hand into your own pocket and come out with 45 shiny one pound coins? I suspect not, provided a copy is available in your departmental library, so that you can read (or copy) the chapters most of interest to you.

I must confess to a personal prejudice against books which look as though they have been run off on a rather old and inefficient typewriter. Surely a book of this quality (and at this price) deserves to be properly printed?

P FENWICK


The authors declare their objectives in their introduction. The book is to be a "practical approach", "in non technical language", "accessible to a wide range of health and social care workers ... and their trainees", "using a problem solving approach" and dealing with different patients as "whole people interacting to their environment".

Few would dispute their objectives, but have they achieved their aim? Their book falls into various sections; basic background information and skills, dealing with symptoms and discussing the problems of care and management.

The background information consists of a useful review of the demographic and epidemiological aspects of the problems faced in caring for an ageing population, an enumeration of the types of service that have developed, but this is followed by an unhelpful flow chart concerning patterns of service delivery and an accompanying description which gives an impression that what occurs in the service in which the authors work is a sort of "Categorical Imperative". A simple clearly written account of the most commonly agreed diagnostic categories would have been most helpful; the flow chart adds little and makes simplistic assumptions some of which are open to argument. It also seems somewhat unusual to give a schema for assessment before clarifying the issues of diagnosis.

Confusion is added to the confusional states which seem to be on a continuum with the dementias on one hand and yet we are exhorted to distinguish them carefully but not given a great deal of help in this task.

The spurious impression of clarity, given by the flow charts is shown again by that referring to the persecutory states, in which it is suggested that the patient is undergoing "real" persecution then they cannot have paranoia; would that it were as easy as that.

The question of how easily people untrained in psychology and psychiatry will understand the text is problematic when in case studies we are expected to understand the meaning of "hostile dependent behaviour" and the technical language in other sections is also complex. Perhaps the problem orientated analyses of clinical cases gives the best flavour of what the authors intended to achieve, conveying aspects of practical and commonsense interventions.

Has the book achieved its aims? Only partly: in part, it is aimed like a blunderbus at a wide field for many disciplines, but the explanations of disease processes and the use of flow charts are simplistic rather than simple, though the glimpses it gives of clinical practice are more encouraging and helpful.

K BERGMANN


Psychologists have commonly distinguished between short lasting memory representations and more durable, longer term forms of storage. The short term temporary memory representations are held to be strictly limited in terms of the amount of information which can be stored at any one time, as well as being transient. In many contemporary information processing models of skills such as language comprehension and problem solving, temporary forms of storage, termed Working Memory, play a central role. Despite the popularity of this

Book reviews