

## BOOK REVIEWS

ANTHONY P. POLEDNAK: *Racial and Ethnic Differences in Disease*. Oxford University Press, Oxford (1989). 364 pp. £49.95 Cloth.

In the United States, just as women doctors have advocated that to conceptualize women as being the same as men leads to a neglect of women's problems and their treatment, so black doctors are increasingly becoming concerned that treating blacks the same as whites is to neglect black problems. The need for targeting education and prevention programs to U.S. blacks with regard to cancer, coronary heart disease, hypertension, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS, is becoming increasingly recognized.

Some have argued that the concept of race is not useful for human populations, a position that this book shows can obfuscate a higher level conceptual and predictive order; it is also a position that ignores the approach of population geneticists studying humans. Despite overlap, drug and food effects often differ sufficiently by race that it is best to test for them independently; the abstracting system *Index Medicus* continues to maintain a scheme for categorization by Caucasoid, Mongoloid and Negroid Race and a new field is developing to study such effects, known as biomedical anthropology.

This volume presents a comprehensive account of differences in the frequencies of various diseases among racial and ethnic groups throughout the world. Racial differences in disease may be explained by a variety of factors—socioeconomic, sociocultural, biological, and genetic. Epidemiological studies provide clues to associations with other factors that explain the associations and can be modified to prevent the disease. Chapters cover genetic diseases, infectious and parasitic diseases, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and many other chronic disorders. The author's nontechnical approach makes the work easily accessible to general readers with an interest in the subject.

Among the findings: breast cancer in women and prostatic cancer in men may be linked to estrogen and testosterone levels in which, around the world, Orientals average lower than Whites who average lower than Blacks. Whites in the U.S.A. commit suicide more often than do Blacks; Blacks die of accidents and homicides more often than do Whites. Cystic Fibrosis (for which a gene has now been isolated) is rare in Orientals and Blacks but relatively common in Whites. It is useful to screen Blacks, but not Jews, for Sickle Cell disease and that, for Tay Sachs disease, the converse policy is indicated. An increased understanding of the genetic and environmental determinants of racial differences cannot but confer more benefits and knowledge of this kind.

J. PHILIPPE RUSHTON

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LAVONNE NEFF: *One of a Kind*. Multnomah, Portland (1988). 197 pp. \$8.95 Paperback.

This is a popular book on individual differences in personality based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. It is addressed to parents and includes clear descriptions of the various types resulting from the Myers-Briggs. Neff applies the types to practical concerns such as parenting, communication, discipline, and school work. She provides interesting discussions of misunderstandings that may result when parents and children have different types.

The book was written in a personal style by an (admitted) extravert who finds it necessary to include a separate chapter on "those mysterious introverts". She does not find extraverts puzzling enough to merit their own chapter. Also, the author includes frequent references to religious concerns and includes a chapter on using children's personality types to "lead them gently to God".

This book will prove interesting and helpful, especially if the reader is a religious, extraverted parent. The style will put off a reader with a more advanced background in personality.

JAMES A. WAKEFIELD JR

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STEVEN A. PETERSON (Ed.), *Political Behavior: Patterns in Everyday Life*. Sage, Newberry Park, Calif. 291 pp. £14.95 Paperback.

With perhaps one exception, this book is not for readers of this journal. The author admits in his introduction that his coverage of personality as an influence on political orientations is incomplete. Even this, however, may be something of an understatement. The name of H. J. Eysenck does not appear in the references. When someone who has contributed so much to this literature can be simply ignored, one must entertain some doubt about the scholarly nature of the work as a whole.

The exception I refer to above, however, is a rather fascinating one. Peterson reports that Republican voters and conservatives generally seem to be the lucky ones of our society. For instance, they tend to have a greater sense of everyday efficacy, tend to be in better health, tend to have suffered less child abuse and tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. One would think, in fact, that this is a rather newsworthy finding. It is even more surprising in the context that social scientists generally seem to give conservatives a rather bad press (e.g. Glad, 1983). Peterson, however, seems unaware that what he has found conflicts with much that went before. One would have thought that some reference to the influential work by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford (1950)—which showed conservatives in a very bad light indeed—could have been expected, but Peterson does not appear to have heard of these authors either.

J. RAY