

## BOOK REVIEWS

B. TIZARD, P. BLATCHFORD, J. BURKE, C. FARQUHAR and I. PLEWIS: *Young Children at School in the Inner City*. Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale, N.J. (1988). pp. vi-viii; 1-220. Paperback. ISBN 0-86377-096-7.

This book is both interesting and curious. It is interesting because it contains a longitudinal study of children aged 4-7 years in 33 Inner-London city infant schools, the children being black or white, male or female. Results demonstrated that the strongest predictor of attainment at age 7 was the amount of 'three-R' knowledge that the children had before they started school. The amount of progress that the children made depended to a significant extent on the school they attended. Expectations of teachers were found to be low at all stages, and not in accord with the actual achievements of the children. Black parents gave their children more help with school work than did white parents, and had a more positive attitude towards giving this help. This is an important finding, as there is a common belief that the usual lower average achievement of black children in school is due to parental failure in this respect. Altogether, factors in the home were strongly associated with the children's pre-school attainments, and thus their attainments at age 7. Another important factor predicting school achievement was their vocabulary score in the W.P.P.S.I. at age 4. In the sample black and white children had similar records of achievement, and the sex differences were the usual—girls superior to boys in writing, inferior in maths.

The book is curious because it completely neglects a large body of evidence related to school achievement. Thus the subject index fails to mention the word "intelligence", although the evidence is pretty conclusive that no other factor is more important in predicting school achievement! The equal achievement of black and white children in this sample is highlighted as if it had any meaning, but of course any similarities or differences observed depend very much on the particular schools chosen. Random samples are required in order to make such comparisons meaningful. As regards sex differences, the authors nowhere mentioned the large body of evidence suggesting biological factors, an omission that is difficult to excuse. Thus far the data given in the book are of interest, though the interpretation is at times misleading and one-sided.

H. J. EYSENCK

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D. J. HARGREAVES and A. M. COLLEY (Eds): *The Psychology of Sex Roles*. Hemisphere Washington, D.C. (1987) 323 pp. \$35.

This book fulfils the need for "everything you wanted to know about sex roles but were afraid to ask" or at least it sets out to do just this. As the editors acknowledge, one of the most expanding areas of psychological interest over the past decade or so has been an interest in Sex Roles and indeed there is a successful journal of that title. For a researcher setting out in this area the book should be a valuable guide. It has 15 chapters divided into three sections—theoretical background, developmental issues, sex roles in adulthood and individual chapters cover such interesting topics as sex roles and mental health and sex roles and work.

As with all edited books the chapters differ in breadth and depth (and dare one admit quality). The chapter on sex roles in cognition has, for instance, nearly 12 pages of references while the chapter on sex roles and personality has just over two. In a book of this kind one wonders what the criteria for inclusion and exclusion were. For instance why were all the contributors British? Why was there so little on cross-cultural studies of sex roles or the measurement of sex roles? Why were all the contributors psychologists? Sociobiology doesn't get much of an airing. But then one cannot do everything and the editors have produced a useful text for any researcher in this field.

A. F. FURNHAM

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K. B. MACDONALD (Ed.): *Sociobiological Perspectives on Human Development*. Springer, Berlin (1988). 405 pp.

This book explores the boundaries between sociobiology and developmental psychology across 13 chapters divided into sections concerned with theoretical issues, children's behaviour, and parent-child interactions. After an historical overview by the editor, two considered discussions imbue ontogenetic life-history analysis with an integrative role. Charlesworth discusses the acquisition of resources, defined generally to include social skills and social status, as an organizing principle of childhood, while Chisholm outlines how ecological factors lead individuals to their particular place on the  $r/K$  continuum of reproductive strategies, defined as the trade off between rapid development with emphasis on "mating effort", and slower development with emphasis on "parenting effort".

The next five chapters offer many insights into familiar topics of social development. Krebs *et al.* discuss the evolution of self-knowledge, including when self-deception may be adaptive. MacDonald re-interprets data from both the social-learning and cognitive-developmental traditions from the viewpoint of the child's self-interest. Segal uniquely examines, among twins, the role of genetic similarity on altruism, attachment, competition and cooperation. Weisfeld and Billings provide a perspective on adolescence with its attendant themes of biological maturation, intergenerational conflict,

and same-sex and opposite-sex bondings. Finally in this section, Lumsden outlines how "epigenetic rules" guide psychological development in one direction over alternatives and provide a basis for understanding gene-culture coevolution.

The final section collates chapters on aspects of family life. Smith reviews research showing how numerous sociobiological predictions have been confirmed relating to bereavement, kin-recognition, bonding, and the pattern of grandparental investment in grandchildren. Burgess *et al.* take up the theme of child maltreatment and suggest that it occurs more often among those adopting the *r*-strategy of low parental effort. MacDonald shows how integrative sociobiology can be by accounting for the compromises made necessary within family life as a result of the simultaneous operation of "centripetal" and "centrifugal" tendencies. The final two chapters, by Draper and Harpending, and by Blain and Barkow, further enhance discussion of the partitioning of human reproductive strategies into mating effort and parent effort, and review some of the correlates of the former strategy and its culmination in the father-absent child: poor school performance, anti-authoritarianism, aggressiveness, sexual precocity, and criminality. As Draper and Harpending distinguish: "father-present societies are those where most males act like dads and father absent societies where most males act like cads" (p. 349).

This book provides further demonstration of the emergence of the new evolutionary thinking into psychology. A rich storehouse of data and hypotheses is provided with a strong emphasis throughout on "psychological development as evolutionary pivot" (Lumsden, p. 236). To understand how evolution affects the way people think and make choices, one must analyze the feedforward from genes via development to the human mind. The concept of "biased learning" is central here. A limitation to this otherwise excellent presentation, however, as indeed with the book as a whole and human sociobiology more generally, is the soft-peddling given to genetically based differences. The "species typical individual" still prevails. When differences are considered, they are usually attributed to environmental factors. For example, while several authors consider the trade-off between "mating effort" and "parental effort" to be of central theoretical importance, the former is consistently alleged to occur as a result of an unstable ecology. A greater emphasis on genetic variance and a firmer commitment to the comparative method (both pioneered, after all, by Charles Darwin) can be expected to advance knowledge even faster. The best way to understand mechanisms is to study differences!

J. PHILIPPE RUSHTON

LAWRENCE H. COHEN (Ed.): *Life Events and Psychological Functioning: Theoretical and Methodological Issues*. Sage, Newbury Park (1988). 273 pp. Hardcover £35; Paperback £14.50.

This collection of papers on psychological stress factors is aimed at specialist researchers and experts rather than students or lay readers. As such it provides much important material, although the lack of indexing makes it difficult to find. Of special interest to *PAID* readers is the chapter by R. W. Swindle *et al.* concerning the role of personality in mediating response to stressful life events. They argue that various dimensions of personality have different salience within different situations and departments of life (work, home, etc.). "Individuals continually construe representations of their immediate situation in the context of their history in situations construed as similar, and in relationship to the goals and plans they feel are relevant to the situation. Thus particular "traits", beliefs, and commitments will be "activated" as determined by their learned relevance for some situations and not others". This theory is intuitively reasonable although the authors will need to do more to convince readers of its practical and scientific utility.

GLENN D. WILSON

ROBERT J. STERNBERG and MICHAEL L. BARNES (Eds): *The Psychology of Love*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. (1988). 383 pp. Hardcover £19.95/\$30.

Only in recent decades has human love been researched by academic psychologists and this book of readings on the topic by well-established researchers provides a good overview of the progress (and in some respects, lack of progress) that has been made. It is not "the first book of this type ever to be written" as the publishers so crassly claim, but it is one of the best.

Individual differences work is represented by Kenneth and Karen Dion who review some personality correlates of the "falling in love" experience. External locus of control is associated with a higher incidence of romantic feeling than internal control. People of low self-esteem fall in love less often but more intensely than people of high self-esteem, and "defensiveness" militates against romance. Highly "self-actualized" people report love experiences that are more realistic and at the same time richer and more satisfying than those of individuals low in self-actualization.

GLENN D. WILSON

JOEL ALLISON, SIDNEY BLATT and CARL N. ZIMET: *The Interpretation of Psychological Tests*. Hemisphere, Washington, D.C. (1988). pp. X + 342.

This book has an accurate but misleading title because it is concerned with what is, in Great Britain, an unusual kind of testing—that derived from the psychoanalytic ego psychological viewpoint. It is also unusual in that it deals with the tests