

**Book Review Editor  
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## **BRAIN AND BEHAVIOUR: PSYCHOLBIOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE**

**by F. Campbell and G. Singer,  
Pergamon Press, 1979.  
NSW, Australia:**

**157 pages**

**Price: Hard-cover \$18.00.**

**Soft-cover \$12.000.**

This introductory text is broad in scope beginning with principles, concepts and research findings of a central nervous system functioning. The book ends with an overview of a few important topics in various areas of brain controlled body mechanisms.

The first chapter introduces in a simple and easily comprehensible way some physiological principles of brain functioning and its complex interactive processes.

The next fifteen short chapters present selected areas of body functions and the influences of the brain on these areas. The first few areas discussed involve biological rhythms, eating and drinking behaviour, sugar control and diabetes, obesity, undernutrition and intelligence, learning and iron deficiency.

It can be seen that the topics outlined in the first half of the book relate to the relationship between, and influences of, the brain on gastrointestinal and digestive systems.

The chapters in the second half of the book, also very brief in nature, explain how the central nervous system influences human behaviour. The topics here include the explanation of functions of the cerebral himispheres, the principles of vision, pain and finally the nervous system control of such hormonal influences on human behaviour as aggression, sexual behaviour, stress and the effects of drugs on the brain functions.

The book is written, as claimed by the authors, for the lay reader. It is indeed easy to read and the diagrammes which are supplemented by comic illustrations are easy to follow. However, the presentation of various topics is superficial and patchy. The writers confine themselves to only few selected areas of the brain functions. They

have chosen topics which are of common interest to the general reading audience. There is no account given of, or introduction to, other important functions that the central nervous system occupies, for example, attention, speech, thinking, action, perception etc. These are the areas omitted but are nevertheless, important in the explanations of the psychobiological influences of the brain on human behaviour.

The explanations are based on the knowledge of research to date. The information however, is incomplete in that it provides only glimpses of accumulated evidence in the journalistic fashion. The authors refer to many research studies and provide the reader with various researchers' names but without further references for the reader to trace the sources of the research findings. Furthermore, most references cited are of very technical nature, incomplete and not readily available to the general reader. The prescribed reference texts for the beginning psychology or medicine students would be more appropriate and could be incorporated at the end of each chapter or provided at the end of the book. The glossary of terms, which substitute the subject index are informative and well presented.

In summary, the authors defined their task as writing a text of sufficient interest so that lay readers would be motivated enough to seek original sources referenced in order to deepen their understanding of the functions of the brain and its influences on bodily mechanisms and behaviour. Students of behaviour, who are seriously thinking of broadening their knowledge about central nervous system and its functions, will presumably find this publication fragmented and lacking in intellectual depth, whereas the general readers will find this introductory book enjoyable to read and informative.

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## **THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF RUNAWAYS**

**Tim Brennan  
David Huizinger  
Delbert S Elliott  
D C Health & Company,  
Lexington, Massachusetts. 1978.**

A much needed book for all workers in the field of youth, as the runaway child is an everpresent problem. A comprehensive approach is taken, looking at family, school and peer group pressures, as well as individual reactions, and including implications for policy, treatment and services.

The authors look at two major socio-psychological explanations of runaway behaviour; the strain theory in which extra stress causes a weakening in the child's bond to the family, and the control theory where the bond remained weak from the beginning, and try to integrate the two.

With the methodology, a comprehensive approach is taken and the research is thorough. They have used a sophisticated sampling procedure with only a 4% refusal rate from the total probability sample. They appear to draw a representative sample, covering children who come before the courts, attend child guidance clinics, seek help at runaway houses or through welfare departments, and also the runaway who does not become involved with official "helpers". They also look at differences according to sex, age, and minority groups, in the latter using researchers from minority groups. Behaviourally specific definitions were used, and information from the runaway child was also compared with information from the parent. There may be a possible problem here, as the mother was used as the source of adult information. It would have been interesting to see if the father's perceptions were the same.

Looking at the behavioural patterns of running away, areas are covered from the early warning signs, the precipitating incidents leading to runaway behaviour, how the child departs, the patterns of behaviour whilst away from home, through to the decision to return home. Parent reactions are also noted. Most of