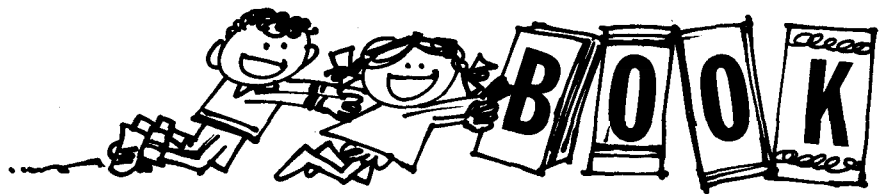


**Book Review Editor  
Marie Campbell**



**BRAIN AND  
BEHAVIOUR:  
PSYCHOBIOLOGY 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 hemispheres, 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 diagrams 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

# REVIEWS



the runaways slept at the home of friends and relatives, with only a surprisingly low 5% using runaway houses. About 50% returned of their own volition, with parents, followed by friends and relatives, being the most successful at locating them. Very few families made use of social agencies after the youth returned home.

Nurturance, parental acceptance, parental satisfaction, parental interest in the child and positive labelling was found to be far less available to runaways than to non-runaways, with runaways experiencing high levels of expressive rejection, and being aware of the rejection and dissatisfaction that their parents feel. Parental discipline differed for varying sub-groups, however they tended to be extreme, either high on scores for affective punishment, deprivation of privileges and social isolation, with withdrawal of love, and also a greater amount of physical abuse with one sub-group being over-protective, over indulgent and denying the child autonomy. Both extremes having the effect of lowering the child's sense of belonging. Runaways also reported a feeling of being differentially treated in comparison with siblings.

The school experiences of runaways was also found to be extremely painful. Apart from the younger age groups of runaways (10-12 yrs), they generally held very negative views towards school. The runaways experienced significantly higher negative labelling, felt that they had access blocked to desirable educational roles and also to occupational roles. They were more likely to be suspended, expelled, truant, or to be physically attacked by other youth in the school, as well as to receive corporal punishment from teachers. Parents of runaway youth were generally found not to have high expectations for their children. The school system was seen to be actively streaming into groups, youth with similar problems.

Considering the weakened family bonds, and lowered commitment to community institutions such as the schools, the finding that runaway youth spend more time with their peers than with their family, was not surprising. No difference was found in the commitment to peers, however dramatic differences were found when focussing on peer pressure toward deviant and anti-social behaviour, with runaways experiencing

much stronger pressure from their peers in this area.

Looking at the personal traits of runaways, they were found to have a higher degree of normlessness, a feeling of cowerlessness and loss of control over their lives in comparison with non-runaways, lower self-esteem, and significantly higher levels of delinquency. It is however to be noted that there was one sub-group of runaways (20%) who showed only marginal differences to the non-runaways, presenting as "normal" kids from "normal" families. These were usually one time only runaways.

Finally, the authors look at the implications of the research for both future research and the treatment/assistance of runaways and their families. Whilst this is an American Study, and we therefore should be wary of imposing it without thought on the Australian scene, we should bear their conclusions in mind. They noted the different perspectives of the individually oriented worker, and the community worker and the need for integration between them. One of their surprise findings was that only 5% of the runaways found their way to runaway houses, so that where studies have been undertaken by such specialised units it would be very unwise to make any generalisations on runaway youth as a group.

They also showed a high degree of predictability on who are the future runaway youth, pointing out the need for services to assist families to be provided before the event, an area in Victoria where we pay ever increasing lip service. The need for changes in school attitudes was also noted, along with the need to stream non-delinquent runaways out of the juvenile justice system, rather than the reverse. It is time we had an equivalent Australian study, and I hypothesise that we would have similar findings. A layman's version for the various workers in the field would be helpful.

B. Richards.



## THE FIRST WORDS IN LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

**A Basic Language Programme for Mentally Handicapped Children .**

**. . . By Bill Gillham, Child Development Research Unit, Department of Psychology, Nottingham University (1979, jointly published by George Allen & Unwin, London, and Beaconsfield Publishers, Beaconsfield). (\$2.95)**

"The First Words Language Programme" is specifically geared for a relatively narrow population, especially mentally handicapped children from 3 to 8 years of age. It makes no claim to be a cure-all for all speech defects or language problems, and clearly states that it is not suitable for certain others, such as those who are physically incapable of speech or are very deaf. It aims at working on the speech a child already has, and going on from there. It recognizes that many children can understand a great deal more than they can express.

The book emphasises the need for careful recording and evaluation at every phase of the programme, and the programme itself must in every case have clear objectives and good organisation — the teacher must know what it is intended to teach the child, and then should have appropriate techniques and materials available for effective instruction. There must be a good range of teaching materials available to cope with very great individual differences in mentally handicapped children, and the teaching itself should be both formal and informal. Short daily sessions are suggested as being the ideal. The surroundings and continually changing language environment should be taken advantage of so that the child's vocabulary and other aspects of language are enriched.

The book is highly instructive as to methodology, right from its early presentation of three teaching levels — demonstrating, choosing, and using; the second being the method of getting the