

leaves us with the task of identifying the core abnormality that defines the illness. Although the contributors to this book are appropriately cautious in drawing conclusions, the evidence they present indicates that the strongest candidate for the essential abnormality is a defect that disrupts the development of normal connections between neurons.

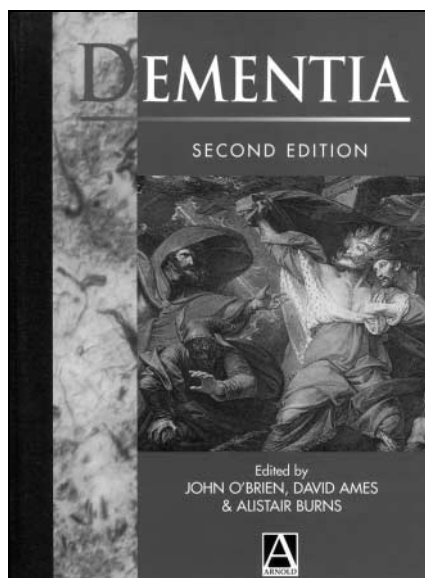
Overall, the book presents a comprehensive review of the data from many sources, with excellent tables that summarise much of the literature in important areas. This is a book that schizophrenia researchers should have on their bookshelves. Students or clinicians seeking an authoritative review of the current state of knowledge regarding the neuropathology of the condition will also benefit from reading it.

Peter F. Liddle Professor of Psychiatry,
University of Nottingham, Queen's Medical Centre,
Nottingham NG6 2UH, UK

Dementia (2nd edn)

Edited by John O'Brien, David Ames
& Alistair Burns. London: Arnold. 2000.
940 pp. £155.00 (hb). ISBN 0 340 75916 X

When this book arrived on my doorstep my heart sank at the size of it and I wondered how I would ever find time to review it properly. However, it is very user-friendly. Starting with a section on general aspects of dementia, followed by chapters on its



specific causes, the book is easy to use as a reference. Questions arising from the first part are answered in the later, more detailed sections.

The book is impressive in its breadth of content. There are comprehensive chapters on diagnostic criteria, rating scales and investigations, all of which are increasingly important to clinicians owing to the introduction of cholinesterase inhibitors and the need to make an early diagnosis. Of equal importance and interest are sections on services for dementia in Europe and worldwide, including those provided by support groups. The Japanese government's recent introduction of a 'long-term insurance

system' will be observed closely by other countries with rapidly ageing populations. The financing of dementia services may deserve a chapter of its own by the time the third edition of this book is published. Alzheimer's disease and other specific dementias are covered in particular detail. The authors are international experts and the information is, unusually for a textbook, extremely up to date.

The first edition of *Dementia* was published in 1994 and the changes in this new edition reflect the great leaps in our knowledge and in public awareness of the disorders. Those working in the dementia services will particularly welcome the chapters on the moral, ethical and legal aspects of dementia, as well as the psychosocial and psychological management of dementia and cognitive impairment. Budding researchers will find this a useful navigational guide through the vast amount of scientific literature on the subject. It is unusual to find a book that is a good source of reference for all of the various bodies interested in dementia but, in this case, the editors have achieved their aim of producing a textbook that is comprehensive, current and accessible to researchers, clinicians and allied professional groups.

Sarah Cullum Medical Research Council
Training Fellow in Health Services Research and
Honorary Specialist Registrar, Department of
Public Health and Primary Care, Institute of
Public Health, Forvie Site, Robinson Way, Cambridge
CB2 2SR, UK