Physical and Psychical Research. An Analysis of Belief. By C. C. L. Gregory and Anita Kohlsen. Omega Press. 15/-

The blurb on the dust-cover of this book claims that it states an important new principle and, hence, that it is important. It aims at integrating in mathematical terms, the physical and psychological sides of science, for which purpose it includes a purely mathematical appendix on the "reversed loop". Presumably, there are people who are able to see how the writers work out their thesis. But to do so one would have to be very well up, both in psychology, parapsychology and mathematics, quite apart from the turbidity of the language itself. As it is, the book can scarcely claim to succeed.

Any attempt to co-ordinate and integrate the sciences, so that a picture of life and nature as a whole emerges, is highly commendable. And indeed, if the various aspects of the mind could be seen to follow laws as definite as those which can be expressed by mathematical equations, it would help enormously. As it is, there is always the elusive factor in psychology, which effectively escapes formulation. Especially is this the case when we come to the realm of parapsychology, of which little is known, and what is known only goes to show that the more one *does* know the greater the field about which one is ignorant.

Thus this book, trying to circumscribe the undefined, if not the indefinable, leaves one more puzzled than ever. Their ideas may be clear enough to the writers, but they have not yet been able to become sufficiently objective about them to convey them to others. To bring a thing to birth means to separate oneself from one's creation. And while it may be that Dr. Gregory and Miss Kohlsen are in the "second stage", what they have given us is, to say the least, a premature infant.

L. J. BENDIT.

Sex and the Social Order. By Georgene H. Seward. Pelican Books. 2/6

This book fails to satisfy, though never to interest, by attempting to encompass too much ground in too small a volume. In effect, Dr. Seward has essayed to write simultaneously a textbook of experimental and social psychology, a popular encyclopaedia of sex knowledge and a Left Wing political tract on Woman's Rights. Because of this it is by no means clear for which section of the population the book has been written. My own feeling is that it is too broad in its scope and consequently too shallow for the specialist reader and yet at the same time because of the technical language in which it is written, beyond the understanding of the general population. For example, I doubt whether many general

readers would understand the sentence "The distribution of M-F scores is clearly bimodal with a narrow overlapping area between."

Dr. Seward has put a tremendous amount of labour into a book written with sincerity and honesty. To develop her thesis she has delved deeply into the relevant literature, and to her credit has given the source of each finding. For 224 pages of reading text there are no less than 701 entries in the bibliography. On the whole, Dr. Seward proves her point that there is little biological evidence to support male dominance in the higher primates. Nevertheless in spite of its purely cultural origins the dominance does exist much to Dr. Seward's indignation. Whether society would in fact benefit in the long run by a cultural revolution of the sort Dr. Seward looks forward to remains debatable. Possibly the chief value of the book will be to stimulate such debate.

The feminist point of view argued so appealingly by Annie Oakley in the song "Anything you can do I can do better" has now been put much more eruditely but in the reviewer's opinion no more convincingly, by the author of this book.

Nevertheless, accompanying her on her intellectual journey is both stimulating and even entertaining if at times, e.g. when she ventures into the deeper waters of clinical psychiatry, a little hair-raising.

Group Discussion in Educational, Social and Working Life. Edited by John Burton. Central Council for Health Education, Tavistock House, London, W.C.1. 3/6

This booklet consists of a collection of essays by various authors. Each essay is complete in itself but the collection read in the presented sequence gives the reader a quite comprehensive idea of the theory, practice and uses of group discussion.

The essays range over so wide a field of human activities and interests that it would be difficult to find a literate group (after reading the booklet, to refer to anything less than the group seems somehow reactionary) which would not find them of both interest and use. There are within the booklet, articles of such diverse interest as the one by Beatrice Pollard on the principles and practice of Quakerism and James Gillespie's thought-provoking essay setting out the problems of contemporary labour/management relations and putting forward a possible solution.

The reader is brought to the realisation that group discussion is a completely plastic medium capable of being moulded to serve widely differing purposes. In the psychotherapeutic hands of Dr. Anthony it is something totally democratic and uninhibited; in