

# Book Reviews

## Psychology and work

P. Ribeaux and S.E. Poppleton

(McMillan Press Ltd, 1978)

(pp. 360)

Price: R15,75

One has little difficulty in finding texts either on general psychology or on industrial psychology, but little hope of finding one which combines these two areas in a meaningful way. A typical text on industrial psychology will include some (small) amount of general psychology, but the emphasis is on the industrial application of some fundamental psychological data. The result is that the person in industry who wants to learn more about psychology has to resort to theoretical texts of general psychology. *Psychology and work* attempts to rectify this situation by giving us a deeper insight into general psychology, linking this to the relevant aspects of work and organizations. Each part of the book comprises chapters of general psychology leading on to chapters of industrial application.

Ribeaux and Poppleton are academics who teach psychology and there is a bias in the text towards general psychology. The one result is that it is therefore not going to be a text which is typically prescribed for a business management course where students are looking for a pragmatic coverage of key business areas such as human relations, motivation, group behaviour, leadership and the like. For example, the topic of leadership is awarded only 20 pages of text and neither Blake and Mouton nor Reddin are mentioned. The chapter on organization does little more than expand on Schein's rational-economic, social, self-actualizing and complex man assumptions.

In places the marriage between general psychology and industrial application is an uneasy one. In the chapter on Personnel Selection one is taken from the concurrent validity model and the synthetic validity model, to the advertisement and the application form.

The book will, however, be relevant to the student of industrial psychology who needs a text which will give him a deeper insight into general psychology than that provided by current texts in the area. He could obviously go back to a text on general psychology, but *Psychology and work* has the distinct advantage that it will be more readable to the industrial psychology student and it does show him where 'pure' psychology fits into his field. The book will also be of considerable interest to the personnel manager who is interested in a deeper insight into the psychological foundations of individual and group behaviour and the personnel functions he is involved in, such as training, selection, counselling, and performance appraisal.