diseases entities, if not completely secure, is at least a widely recognised working hypothesis, and it is one that will be adopted here" (p9). Unfortunately it becomes clear later in the book that the disease model is not really a working hypothesis to be proved effective or otherwise by the author, but rather the model is assumed effective and this assumption remains unchallenged throughout the book. Not only is the physical disease model the preferred theory, but drug therapy seems the preferred practice: "Once a depressive disorder had been identified by whatever means, our standard treatment was the prescription of the tricyclic anti-depressant Amitriptyline in the dose 125-175 mg daily. Treatment often seemed effective (sic)" (1987:134).

Ben-Tovim offers a taxonomy of psychiatric conditions that are echoed in his chapter titles: emergencies and alcohol; epilepsy, schizophrenia and depression; and what he calls "headaches and heartaches", the symptoms relating to "non-psychotic distress". Although he admits that "non-psychiatric distress" is the one most amenable to non-drug therapy it proved difficult for the author to offer non-medical treatment or help. In fact rarely do interventions described in the book refer to helpers other than nurses or doctors. Social workers are mentioned in passing four times and psychologists twice, and even then without any description of an interventive role.

With the caveat, then, that this book is a fairly explicit description of a purely medical approach to diagnoses and treatments, it is a valuable pioneer work in a field that badly needs indigenous literature.

Reviewed by Joe Hampson SJ, Harare.

Sex Roles, Population and Development in West Africa, Christine Oppong (ed), Heinemann, London 1987 (242pp, £25hbk).

This book is a collection of thirteen diverse and highly informative studies of women in development. The common theme focuses on the crucial roles women play in both the informal and formal sectors, and the contributions emphasise that, for effective development planning in general, women's existing roles, their needs and their potential must be central considerations.

The papers are presented under four headings: Women's Work (two studies, of Muslim women in Nigeria, and women in Bamaka, capital of Mali); Fertility, Parenthood and Development: Yoruba Experiences (five papers on the Yoruba in Nigeria); Population Policies, Family Planning and Family Life Education: Ghanaian Lessons (three studies); and Government Plans and Development Policies (three papers, examining policy in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana).

It can be seen that although the book purports to cover West Africa, in reality it examines only four of the eighteen countries that might have been included. Of the thirteen papers, seven concern Nigeria, with the major focus on the Yoruba. Thus the book in no way attempts to give a balanced over view of the whole region, but presents selected, detailed studies whose orientation and conclusions have a much a wider geographical relevance. Indeed, their relevance is in many senses global, and not restricted to West Africa as a region.

The various papers reflect different academic disciplines and research methodologies. The latter include household surveys, individual and group studies through participant observation and structured interviews, and the use of census data and other official statistics, policy documents, and other existing material. These are presented within the framework of international developments, such as UN, ILO and OAU initiatives, for example the Lagos Plan of Action 1981.

The studies are all of countries with a significant incidence of extreme poverty, and many common problems of development. These include socioeconomic flux as traditional ways and values compete with modernisation; the disruption of the family; illiteracy; and a young population structure and rapid population growth, despite continuing high mortality (at 139, the infant mortality rate of the region is the highest recorded in the world). Fertility is, predictably, extremely high.

There are differential rights, expectations, access to education, training and employment, status, independence and power, between men and women. This aspect, a focus of the book, is seen as constituting a central contradiction and difficulty in development. The authors illustrate that family decisions, and, crucially, women's roles in the family and in production, are of great relevance to the success or failure of development policies at a national, as well as at a local, level. Therefore it is vital for planners and others to understand the basis for individual decision making and day to day activities with the family, and the constraints and influences on them.

One paper (by Oppong) also examines men's importance in the family, as fathers and in relation to child spacing. These issues are as often neglected as are women's contributions to the economy through their family roles and informal production.

The book is aimed at a wide readership, including planners, politicians, social researchers, demographers, and practitioners in many aspects of development. Some of the studies are fairly technical, and between them include a substantial amount of hard data, as well as detailed discussion and analysis. The whole cannot be called an easy read, but it contains a wealth of well-researched material that rewards perseverance. It should prove a valuable resource book for development workers and planners in general.

Reviewed by Helen Jackson, lecturer, School of Social Work, Harare.

South Africa: A New US Policy for the 1990s, Kevin Danaher, Institute for Food and Development Policy, San Francisco, 1988 (69pp, US$6.00).

Kevin Danaher's short book is a model of crisp policy writing. It should be prescribed reading for everyone studying Southern Africa, whether or not they agree with him. It begins by quoting Martin Luther King in 1965, "the shame of the United States is that it is objectively an ally of this monstrous [South African] government in its grim war with its own black people" (p1). Danaher surveys the twenty years subsequent to this statement and concludes that "the United States remains the single most important protector of South Africa's apartheid regime" (p1). He continues "US policymakers were forced into a 'straddle' regarding apartheid: denouncing white minority rule while doing little to interfere with the support given to apartheid by major US corporations and security agencies of the US government" (p2).

Danaher argues that US policy toward South Africa was "accumulationist: safeguarding US corporate access to South Africa`s human and natural resources in order to accumulate capital" (p3). In due course, "while verbal criticism of Pretoria`s violence was designed to placate critics of apartheid, continued ties to white minority interests were designed to please corporate and national security interests" (p2f). However, five years into the Reagan administration, "public pressure forced the White House to declare limited sanctions" (p7).

In Danaher's view, the central defect of the Reagan policy on South Africa was an obsession with East-West competition. In a secret memorandum Chester Crocker stressed that "the top US priority is to stop Soviet encroachment in Africa" (p8). Danaher believes the chief threat to stability in the region is South Africa, not Moscow. "The permissiveness of constructive engagement allowed Pretoria to create havoc throughout the region" (p9). Danaher quotes Robert Mugabe: "Those who judge Africa in terms of East and West do us a grave disservice and they display deep ignorance" (p11).

On taking office, Chester Crocker knew little of Africa except the 'white' minority, on which he had published. "Crocker and his Rhodesian wife also owned thousands of dollars of stock in South African gold mines" (p9). Crocker said to Danaher in 1980, "All Reagan knows about Southern Africa is that he's on the side of the whites" (p10). But Danaher asserts that "Pretoria was a liability, not an