

groups; the necessity to condense data and the utility of principal component analysis for that purpose; the power of the procedures to produce apparent clusters in homogeneous data; the resulting necessity for cautious conclusions, and further validation. In my own study the hierarchical nature of successive groupings strongly indicated that they were real rather than accidental. Mr. Everitt's approach to this problem (*Journal*, October 1971, 119, 399) of carrying out analyses by several different clustering methods is a valuable one, although the limited availability until recently of suitable programmes, and the enormous amount of computer time that they require, has put it out of the reach of most investigators.

It is important to note, however, that many similar criticisms can be levelled at factor analysis, which has also been used in studies of classification. For instance, many alternative methods of factor analysis have been described; criteria for rotations and deciding on the number of factors are arbitrary, and the choice of alternative solutions is highly dependent on subjective interpretation. Many of these multivariate procedures are better regarded as exploratory and hypothesis-generating, rather than hypothesis-testing. Moreover, factor analysis has a serious disadvantage in this context in that it is based on a model of orthogonal and continuous dimensions. An individual may score high or low on several factors simultaneously, a situation very different from that of membership in one of a set of mutually exclusive groups. I do not wish to decry the value of a continuum view of psychiatric classification in some circumstances, but it is still much more often a concept of diagnostic groups which underlies clinical thinking and research studies.

It would be a pity if the problems Mr. Everitt points out were allowed to obscure the considerable advantage cluster analytic techniques have over factor analysis in studies seeking diagnostic groupings, in that they are based on the appropriate model of discrete groups.

E. S. PAYKEL.

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#### THE PRICE OF BOOKS.

DEAR SIR,

The books of Charles C. Thomas & Co., of Springfield, Illinois, are frequently reviewed in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*; one sixth of the reviewed books in the past three issues containing reviews (November 1971, January and February 1972) originated from them.

To test a casual impression that their books were more expensive than the generality of books reviewed,

I have compared the average page cost, in cents, to the customer, of Thomas's books with books from other publishers. I used the average page cost rather than the average book cost, for Thomas may be making bigger books. Unpriced books, cheap paperbacks and books priced in other currencies than dollars or pounds are excluded. The dollar conversion rate used was \$2.60 (*Times* 2.3.72).

	No. of books	Average page cost	Relation to overall average cost
Charles C. Thomas ..	19	4.4 c	+26%
Other publishers' books priced in pounds sterling .. ..	66	3.2 c	-9%
Other publisher's books priced in U.S. dollars	18	3.5 c	0%
Total books .. ..	103	3.5 c	

The table makes it perfectly clear that Charles C. Thomas charge a great deal more for their books than do other publishers, English or American. There may, of course, be a good reason for this difference—Thomas, for example, may publish worthwhile but recondite work necessitating small editions and consequently high production costs per book. But books should be cheap and publishers not make undue profits from disseminating knowledge, and it seemed worthwhile, therefore, to bring this cost comparison to the notice of those who buy books either for themselves or on behalf of libraries.

B. M. BARRACLOUGH.

*M.R.C. Clinical Psychiatry Unit,  
Graylingwell Hospital,  
Chichester, Sussex.*

DEAR SIR,

In reply to Dr. Barraclough, I would say that he is being critical without providing a really thorough consideration of many different matters.

Dr. Barraclough does say that one reason for our high prices may be because we 'may publish worthwhile but recondite works necessitating small editions and consequently high production costs per book'. This consideration alone would explain higher retail prices, because small editions, with higher costs per copy therefore, must necessarily have higher retail prices. A publisher cannot produce fifteen hundred copies of an edition, or two thousand copies, and have a retail price, based on number of pages, comparable to a textbook which may be printed in much larger quantities.

We determine our retail prices by multiplying our costs per copy times four and taking the closest

25 per cent figure thereto. I believe that most publishers price their books on this same basis—although some of the publishers of textbooks probably use a multiple of five, thus giving them greater margins, the opportunity for sending out quantities of complimentary copies to prospective class users.

We use the multiple of four to cover our manufacturing costs (25 per cent), our overhead costs including advertising (30 per cent), our allowances for bookstore discounts (20 per cent to 40 per cent), our allowance for author royalty (8 per cent to 20 per cent), and an allowance for books issued for complimentary purposes such as for review in journals, for copies for the author and in some cases for complimentary copies for professors who may be in a position to recommend the book for text use, and for books which may be unsold or damaged (this is an unknown percentage but might well be considered at 10 per cent). Adding these percentages, you will see that these run from 93 per cent to 150 per cent of retail price! It is obvious that our costs are great. Not all of our books are sold through bookstores, but many are.

With an expanding business, we find that we usually have to borrow money to pay our royalties promptly each year in January.

There are other considerations too. I believe that if you will compare our books with those of other publishers, on the basis of format and typography, quality of paper and binding, and the like, our books may be somewhat superior in some instances.

I think it is also important to consider page size. Many of our books have a rather large size—such as  $7 \times 10$ , or  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ . Our smallest size is about  $6 \times 9$ . Many publishers have page sizes which are less than  $6 \times 9$ .

Many of our books—even in the field of psychiatry—are well illustrated in black and white and sometimes in colour. We have quite a number of books in this field, at the present time, with rather large amounts of colour illustrations.

I personally don't know very much about the policy and procedure of other publishers, but I have been publishing books (first working with my father, Charles C. Thomas and my mother, N. P. Thomas) for over thirty years, and we have always found it very important to be sufficiently practical to cover our costs of doing business. If we did not do that, we certainly could not expand upon our publishing programme. We would not be able to pay our printing bills or our advertising bills.

It has not been necessary for us to merge with other, large publishers, or to 'go public'—and the consequence is that we have been able to reserve to ourselves the decision as to the kind of books which

we will publish. We endeavour to do worthwhile books, regardless of whether these books are apt to have a large sale. We publish many books which we know are not going to have a large sale but which we feel should be published. This is not to say that we do not like to publish textbooks which do have a large sale! I am sure that you and your readers are aware of valuable books which we have done which might well not have been published at all if we had not produced them. Ninety-nine per cent of the books which we published are produced at our expense—without subvention or contribution from anyone else.

There are a great many considerations in book publishing. There are many in book pricing. While I have been involved with these matters for these some thirty years, I am still learning and am trying constantly to improve our procedures of production and distribution. We hope very much that all of our authors and customers will feel that we have and are trying to do a good job.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to write this letter.

PAYNE THOMAS.

*Editorial Office,  
Charles C. Thomas—Publishers,  
735 North Atlantic Boulevard,  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33304, U.S.A.*

#### A CORRECTION

DEAR SIR,

May I, with due respect, point out an error in Dr. Denis Leigh's review of Professor Oskar Diethelm's book published in the issue of the *Journal* for March p. 351. Dr. Leigh states that '... 1,100 of these dissertations printed from 1750 to illustrate the development of psychiatry'. This, of course, should read '... before 1750 ...'.

H. R. ROLLIN.

*Horton Hospital,  
Epsom, Surrey.*

#### A BOOK ON FAITH-HEALING

DEAR SIR,

I would like you to publish the following in the Correspondence section of *The British Journal of Psychiatry*.

I am editing a book on the role of faith or religion in healing from a physician's standpoint. Those interested in writing for this book, please send for details to me at the address below.

CLAUDE A. FRAZIER.

*4-C Doctors Park,  
Asheville, N.C. 28801, U.S.A.*