ON THE BEAT. By Anne Mendoza and Joan Rimmer. (Boosey & Hawkes, 1967, 7s. 6d.)

This is a clearly written guide to the practical musical experience all children may have, if they are given access to the melodic percussion instruments so much used these days.

Teachers and leaders of groups who have used recorders, bamboo pipes or rhythm percussion instruments with children know how they respond to the physical as well as the musical activity. Now, we have an even more fruitful branch of music-making which, in addition to these, makes use of chime bars, dulcimers, glockenspiels and xylophones, so that even the slowest child can make some contribution to a combined effort, and enjoy success.

The sections headed Children's Exploration and Experiment, The Beginning o
Disciplined Ensemble and Varied Ensemble give some idea of the scope of the book. The musical basis is carefully chosen traditional material. The photographs of children involved in performance, together with facsimiles of some of their own musical compositions, bear witness to the vitality of the work suggested in this stimulating book.

Elizabeth Barnard

DEPRIVATION OF MATERNAL CARE—A RE-ASSESSMENT OF ITS EFFECTS. (Published by World Health Organisation, Geneva, 1962. Obtainable from H.M.S.O., 12s.)

The publication by W.H.O. in 1951 of Bowlby’s monograph on Maternal Care and Mental Health was, by general consent, a major event which must rank amongst the most significant new contributions made in the field of mental health. Most people would agree also that the impact of that monograph has been intense, and responsible for much valuable re-thinking and action in both professional and administrative circles. But, like all epoch-making discoveries, it has provoked some strong opposition and criticism, whilst, at the other extreme, Bowlby’s thesis has sometimes been “over-sold” (with unfortunate, if unintentional, results) by those who have read more into the concept than was ever described in the original monograph. It is very timely, therefore, that W.H.O. should have published, as No. 14 of their Public Health Papers, this new assessment of the concept, and of the further research and thought which has gone into this problem since 1951.

As one would expect, all the contributions are of a very high calibre, and it would be difficult to select any one as the most valuable. Dr. Bowlby himself was prevented by other commitments from contributing to this new publication. But the seven contributors include Dr. Margaret Mead, Dr. Mary Ainsworth and Lady Wootton; and each one has a fresh, stimulating and thoughtful contribution to make. The result is a well-balanced and (in the best sense of the word) critical re-assessment.

It would be both impossible and unfair to attempt to condense any, or all, of this 163-page book into a review-précis—the more so since it is to be hoped that this publication itself will have as large a sale, and as varied a reading audience, as did Bowlby’s original contribution. It certainly deserves to achieve such a result.

Indeed, the only, and minor, criticism that one could make would be of the arrangement of the extensive bibliography by chapters, rather than as one central whole. Inevitably the existing method produces a good deal of unnecessary and confusing repetition.

T. A. Ratcliffe

WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN HOSPITALS. A Guide for the Professional Team. By Emma N. Plank. (Tavistock, 1964, 21s.)

When a child enters hospital, medical, surgical and nursing procedures take precedence, but a child does not suspend his needs for physical, intellectual and emotional provision. Unrestricted visiting of children in hospital has become the official policy (if not the universal practice) in this country, and this has been hailed as a major triumph for the teachings of child psychiatry. This book goes much further. It clearly describes the actual procedures which have been built up in hospitals in Cleveland, U.S.A., in order to deal with the child’s needs as a whole.

The author trained as a teacher and is now an Assistant Professor of Child Development. She and her colleagues have attempted to face the problem of the child’s life in hospital in which playing, learning and making contacts with other children, and with grown-ups, have all to be fitted into a day which also includes diagnostic and treatment procedures. They do not flinch from discussion with the child of the realities of anaesthesia, operations and post-operation procedure. They face the questions that are asked about the deaths of other children. Many adults evade these points, in the belief that what is not discussed will not be thought to exist.

The author does not waste time justifying theoretical concepts, although she gives appropriate references and a bibliography. She compresses actual experience into very few words.