Spelling errors rarely intrude, but I was unhappy to see one of Professor Ian Donald's original team mis-named as 'MacVican' on page 83.

I enjoyed this book and recommend it to ultrasound technicians, radiologists with ultrasound responsibilities, and gynaecologists. It is indeed an appropriate memorial to Dr Bill Steel, a pioneer of ultrasound, who sadly died during its preparation.

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Hypnotherapy of Pain in Children with Cancer, Josephine R. Hilgand and Samuel LeBaron. Pp. x + 250, William Kaufmann, Los Altos, California, 1984. £18.95.

This book provides a comprehensive and valuable discussion of the use of hypnosis to help children with pain and anxiety. However, a previous lack of interest in hypnosis should not deter the reader as the text reveals fascinating aspects of children's use of fantasy and coping mechanisms which have broader implications than just hypnosis.

After an introduction to hypnosis, its use in children and in the relief of pain, the book centres around work performed at Stanford Children's Hospital. It focuses particularly on a carefully constructed study of the value of hypnosis for children with malignant diseases undergoing repeated bone marrow aspirations. The design, techniques used and overall results, both successes and failures, are reported. A chapter also describes how the same techniques were adapted to other specific symptoms of distress in individual patients. One of the most exciting and helpful aspects of this book are the frequent detailed and vivid examples of individual children's hypnotic experiences, which the authors then relate to factors such as the children's ages, hypnotic potential and their ability to experience pain relief. In the course of their studies a number of children were found who had developed their own coping mechanisms, and these are also explored. An important chapter integrates many of their ideas into developing what they call 'a therapeutic atmosphere' in the oncology unit and the roles of the parents, nurses and physicians in this. The latter part of the book concentrates more on theoretical aspects and the development of hypnotic ability in children with a final chapter of suggestions for future research and potential. There is a comprehensive reference list and good index.

The work described has been concerned primarily with helping children over acute episodes of pain and it is clear that the hypnotherapists were extremely sensitive and ingenious as well as technically capable. It will be of interest to see whether others can have equal success with hypnotherapy in the same or related situations. Although the authors do not specify, my impression is that this book is aimed at those with some background in psychology. However, it is written clearly and directly, avoiding jargon, so that it can be recommended to anyone involved in the care of seriously ill children.

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In Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer, edited by Alan Trounson and Carl Wood. Pp.vix + 254, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1984. £25.00.

The techniques and ethics of *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) have been the subject of much debate and scientific study since Steptoe and Edwards reported their first successful delivery of a live healthy female infant in 1978 utilizing the technique. Several hundred babies world wide have now been delivered following IVF procedures. The techniques have their genesis in the basic sciences and it is fitting that the authors acknowledge this by the extent of these chapters in the text. These give the reader a clear understanding of the mechanisms involved in producing mature, viable, fertilizable oocytes and the difficulties encountered in the assessment of human embryos and establishment of implantation.

The third section reviews some of the practical aspects involved with selection of patients for treatment and problems encountered during oocyte collection and embryo transfer. This book is not a practical manual for those wishing to set up an IVF treatment service but is a text to be read by anyone involved in this field to provide a broad and well balanced background. The book cannot be held to be comprehensive but in an area of medicine so rapidly developing this can only be expected. This book has many attributes and should be of interest to scientists, clinicians and students in the understanding of a critical new technology in human reproductive medicine.

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Manual of Paediatric Gastroenterology, John H. Tripp and David C. A. Candy. Pp.iii + 168, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1985. £8.95.

The authors and the publishers are to be complimented for introducing this new Manual series of which this is the first. It provides for the young clinician a convenient source of reference, clearly laid out and problem orientated. The 'telegraphic style' was intended to make it particularly 'usable'.

In just over 150 pages, the subject is extremely well covered and the information it provides is precise, with good sound, useful factual information, such as the prevalence of certain conditions. I particularly liked the awareness of developing countries, and putting the relevance of acute diarrhoea in perspective (p.24) 'Reduction in mortality from this cause is the major programme for WHO for the 1980s'.

Intestinal and abdominal disorders in children can often be complex and difficult to evaluate and manage. This book provides up to date information on what is and is not known. The schemes for management and investigation are particularly helpful and comprehensive. In a book of this size, it is helpful that even rare conditions such as Crohn's disease are included.

Inevitably there are omissions of information – no mention that an inguinal hernia in a girl necessitates a Buccal smear to exclude testicular feminising syndrome (p. 21) and no cross reference between mesenteric adenitis and recurrent abdominal pain. Why I wonder are dosages given for such conditions such as steroids in Crohn's disease but not the dose of intravenous diazepam.

The aim of this book is to provide a practical handbook for paediatricians which it has done very well. It is also hoped that it might be useful to paediatric surgeons, family practitioners and hospital and community nurses. At £8.95 this book is extremely good value.

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Oxford Textbook of Public Health, edited by Walter W. Holland, Roger Detels, George Knox, with the assistance of Ellie Breeze. Vol. 1: History, Determinants, Scope, and Strategies. Pp.xii + 280, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, Toronto, 1984. £25.00.

The Oxford Textbook of Public Health has been launched to succeed Hobson's textbook of public health, although the 'international nature' of Hobson's book has here been changed to a predominant Anglo-American emphasis. There are to be four volumes, but only the first has so far been published. There is a short introductory section on the history and current scope of the subject, two long sections, one on the determinants of health and disease and the other on the legislative and economic aspects of public health, and a final short section on global health strategies. The other three volumes will cover public health promotion, investigative methods and their specific application.

The first volume is attractively presented, the text amply supported by tables and figures. The contributors are authorities in their fields. However, the editorial objective to portray mainly principles and strategies has produced a style which is rather too philosophical and explorative for a reference book of this kind. The balance and content of the first volume are surprising; some of the subject material lacks direct relevance to public health practice (the haemoglobinopathies, the transport of chemicals in soil) yet there is only brief discussion of topical health determinants such as asbestos, lead, smoking and poor housing. There is an account of the pathogenesis but little on the epidemiology of infectious diseases. Taken on its own, the first volume is somewhat disappointing; the other three volumes may of course redress the balance.

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Paediatric Neuroendocrinology, edited by Derek Gupta, with Patrizia Borrelli and Andrea Attansio. Pp. x + 246, Croom Helm, London, Sydney. £25.00.

The 16 chapters in this book constitute the major papers from the first International Symposium on Paediatric Neuroendocrinology held in Rome in November 1983. The authors of thirteen of the chapters concentrate on presentation of their own research work whilst the remaining three chapters review areas as diverse as the neuroendocrine control of puberty and neuroendocrinological aspects of diabetes mellitus. The third review chapter by Swanson on sex differences in the brain is the pick of the review chapters as it manages to be instructive as well as entertaining.

In the rest of the book the animal model used for the studies varies, with seven chapters on the rat and six chapters on the human. The standard is variable and the best chapters are provided by the 'heavyweights', Gupta on control of gonadotroin secretion in relation to maturity, Martini on endogenous opioids and puberty, New on the polymorphism of ACTH in hyperaldosteronism and adrenal hyperplasia and Reiter on the pineal and sexual development in the male rat.

Other topics discussed include neuropeptides, emotional behaviour and cardiac responses; thyroid hormones and the developing brain; neurotransmitters and growth hormone secretion; beta-endorphin, ACTH and prolactin secretion through childhood.

Unfortunately the worst chapters in this volume are poor and of little value. Therefore I do not think that this book represents sufficiently good value for the individual to purchase it. It is the sort of book that one will wish to dip into for selected topics but not to read in its entirety. It would be a useful buy for a hospital library or an institute with a large endocrine unit.

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Recent Advances in Anaesthesia and Analgesia, No. 15, edited by R.S. Atkinson and A.P. Adams. Pp. ix + 231, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £14.00.

'I never read a book before reviewing it: it prejudices a man so' (Sydney Smith 1771–1845).

The recruitment of Professor Adams to *Recent Advances in Anaesthesia and Analgesia* is to be welcomed and it reflects the need for an additional editor to scrutinize the increase in new material that is now considered to be within the sphere of the speciality. There are chapters on intravenous agents including relaxants as well as those on synthetic and spinal analgesia. Inhalation of gastric contents continues to be reviewed as well as a detailed presentation of malignant hyperpyrexia. This chapter is unwittingly preceded by one on thermal injury! Upper airway obstruction in children was a recent question in the FFA examination and one suspects that this book will become the gospel for the examination candidate as it was in Langton Hewer's time.

The chapter on calcium antagonists is well presented while that on morbidity and mortality illuminates some of the