Book Reviews

Anorexia Nervosa: the Broken Circle, Ann Erichsen. Pp. 220. Faber, London, Boston, 1985. £3.95.

I tend to mistrust medical books written by patients or their relatives, for they are often too self-indulgent allowing the author to ventilate his feelings but failing to meet the needs of the reader. In this respect I have been disarmed by Ann Erichsen's book about anorexia nervosa. She is the mother of a girl who suffered from this illness in which intrafamily dynamics play an important part. She has written a fair and objective account from a mother's viewpoint and has also provided a comprehensive overview of the nature of anorexia nervosa and its management. She has researched her subject carefully and has successfully avoided the pitfalls she may have encountered as the mother of an anorectic writing such a book. She writes with ease, perception and balance and her insight into the mother–daughter relationship is invaluable.

The book is designed for everyone – the doctor, the social worker, the counsellor and the family faced with anorexia nervosa. This is its weakness, for in terms of clinical description she is upstaged by a masterly eighteen page introductory overview of the subject by Dr Peter Dally and also by Professor Arthur Crisp's excellent 'Anorexia Nervosa: Let Me Be' which also includes accounts by patients and their relatives. Her book can worthily hold its place on the shelf containing a rapidly expanding literature about a modern disease of affluent Western society.

Edward Stonehill
Central Middlesex Hospital.
London NW10 7NS.

Biological Effects of Ultrasound, edited by Wesley L. Nyborg and Marvin C. Ziskin. Clinics in Diagnostic Ultrasound. Vol. 16. Pp. xiii + 192, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1985. £24.00.

In this country, over half the children born today have been exposed to ultrasound prior to birth and it is appropriate that a text on the biological effects of ultrasound should appear.

This is the sixteenth volume in an already excellent series of *Clinics in Diagnostic Ultrasound*. The book is divided into two main parts. The first deals with the physical principles and effects of diagnostic ultrasound. There are chapters dealing with the effects at cellular level and on possible genetic and inherited changes as well as on the biological effects on laboratory animals and the mammalian fetus. It looks closely at *in vitro* studies which have been the main cause for concern but points out the problems of relating these directly to human exposure. The second half of the book deals with the therapeutic applications of ultrasound such as its use in musculo-skeletal trauma and urology. There is also a good review chapter on the use of local hyperthermia generated by ultrasound in cancer therapy. The final chapter lists the actual recommendations by various organizations as to equipment design and the clinical use of ultrasound. This is followed by a nice section of personal opinions and advice

from individuals working with ultrasound.

This book provides an excellent review of the literature on what is a most complex subject. The conclusions are reassuring while pointing out the need for further investigation. This book should be essential reading for anyone involved with diagnostic or therapeutic ultrasound who wants to provide an informed answer to the concerns and doubts being expressed about the use of ultrasound in clinical practice.

David R.M. Lindsell
Department of Radiology
John Radcliffe Hospital.
Oxford.

Cerebral Blood Flow, Metabolism and Epilepsy. Proceedings of the International Symposium, Montpellier, France, 27–28 June 1983, edited by M. Baldy-Moulinier, D.H. Ingvar and B.S. Meldrum. Current Problems in Epilepsy, Vol. 1. Pp. viii + 400, illustrated. John Libbey Eurotext, London, Paris, 1983. £32.00, US\$56.00, FF415.00.

In his 150th year, Hughlings Jackson would have been intrigued by this book, not only by the first four words of the text proper, which award him a knighthood, undoubtedly well-deserved but never actually achieved, but also to see which of his theories had gained support, and which required modification, when the most sophisticated of modern techniques are applied to the physiology of cerebral metabolism in epilepsy. This is a report of a symposium held at Montpellier in 1983, and is divided into three major sections – clinical, pathophysiological, and related to the actions of neurotransmitters and anticonvulsants. The investigative techniques illustrated include modern blood flow studies, scanning by means of computed tomography, P.E.T., and nuclear magnetic resonance and the recent application of these imaging techniques to electrolyte behaviour, the blood-brain barrier, and the action of both convulsive and anticonvulsive drugs. It is a beautifully produced, well-edited, profusely illustrated book with extensive bibliographies to each chapter, but it is not what one might call bedside reading. To those working in these specific fields it will be of great importance, and shows that a remarkable degree of uniformity of results come from many widely separated countries, but for the practising clinician, though of great interest, it is pretty heavy going. A new language is springing up which at times is very difficult to follow, and were it not for the excellent summaries which precede each chapter, there are some which would be almost incomprehensible to the average neurologist. This however is the language of the future and as we have had to reorientate ourselves to the day-by-day interpretation of CT scans so we will have to come to terms with the methods now available for the study of epilepsy, which may before long shunt the EEG into the same siding as the pneumoencephalogram. It is a book such as this that gives a vivid overall picture of future potential, particularly as each author is very careful to emphasise what is certain, and what is yet to be proven, in its value in