medicine specialists from Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The editor, Dr J. Mark Elwood, must be congratulated on producing a volume which makes fascinating, informative, and easy reading, with such heterogeneous authorship.

Professor Rona MacKie contributes two chapters and states that the incidence of malignant melanoma has doubled in some countries in the past ten years, making malignant melanoma the most rapidly increasing malignancy after lung cancer in women; also of special interest to practising clinicians is the chapter by Professor Thomas Fitzpatrick and his team from Harvard on the identification of those at risk and the detection of precursor lesions in early melanomas. His diagnostic acronym Asymmetry, Border, Colour, Diameter, Elevation, adorns the front cover of the book.

Other chapters explore causation and pathogenesis, ethnic origin, exposure to sunlight, and important host factors such as benign and dysplastic naevi.

Melanoma and Naevi is compulsory and compulsive reading for all dermatologists, oncologists, and plastic surgeons, though the price may inhibit individual purchase.

Patrick Hall-Smith
Brighton General Hospital,
Elm Grove,
Brighton BN2 3EW.

1200 Multiple Choice Questions in Pharmacology, Second edition, edited by R.W. Foster. Pp. ix + 177, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1986. £6.95.

The object of this book is to provide a source of ready made questions for use by examiners and to enable them to construct new questions. It also aims to provide candidates with practice for multiple choice examinations and to assess their own progress in learning pharmacology. All nine of the most commonly presented question forms and their general rubrics are demonstrated. The questions cover a wide range of topics in both the pre-clinical and clinical pharmacology syllabus although the use of this book will encourage students to maintain their knowledge of basic pharmacology until the final medical examination. The questions are mainly up-to-date involving current therapy and usage. This book is useful as far as it goes and I will recommend it to my students.

However, many students have difficulties with multiple choice questions because they are unable to grasp the nature of the rules regarding the marking of such questions and the need to optimise their choices in the true/false/don't know paradigm. A discussion of marking systems and optimising choices would enhance future editions. Although this information is available in other books on multiple choice question techniques, it would be very useful if it could be included in the next edition of this book.

R.M. Pearson
Department of Clinical Pharmacology,
St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College,
London EC1A 7BE.

Multiple Sclerosis, by Bernie O'Brien. Pp. 64, illustrated. Office of Health Economics, London, 1987. £1.00.

This small book, No. 87, from the Office of Health Economics, is of the same excellent standard as previous titles in the series updating an earlier MS publication (OHE, 1975). Although the main aim is to 'examine the health service consequences of the disease in terms of resource utilisation in hospitals and general practitioner consultations', it also succeeds at the more familiar levels as well as with the main aim. The clinico-pathological introduction is done well. The three epidemiological sections cover England and Wales, international comparisons and 'clues to a cause?'. The standard of the tables, graphs and maps is extremely good throughout and all provide excellent teaching material. The decision to include both Kurtzke's scales in full cannot be praised too highly. After all, the major basis to research into MS, as the author points out, is to define a homogeneous patient group and currently these are the only scales which seem to be accepted by investigators from different countries.

The discussions on treatment, health costs and also the future are equally well done. The references have been thoughtfully selected, a difficult task in this subject.

In summary, this is a superb little book to suit the needs of nearly everybody – and at £1.00 a copy there can be little excuse not to purchase one or more copies – the latter to ensure at least one copy stays on your shelf.

R. Capildeo
Department of Neurology,
Old Church Hospital,
Romford, Essex.

Objectives for Care: Specifying Standards for Clinical Nursing, edited by G.D. Snowley & P.J. Nicklin. Pp. xiv + 77. Austen Cornish, London, 1987. £7.50.

In just over seventy pages this book attempts to list a set of nursing objectives for promoting individualized patient care based on an activities of daily living framework. That the editors have succeeded in distilling the array of information down into several statements under each of the main headings is noteworthy. However one is reminded of a statement in the introduction when considering the content and purpose of the book – 'what has been accomplished in preparing this book should not be measured in terms of its completion – the product – but by the quality and rigour of the debate – the process' (p. xii). It is a pity the reader is not party to this exchange because without it the book could be perceived as nothing more than a statement of the obvious.

However, this criticism would be missing the point and it would take away several of the book's strengths. Firstly, the authors have succeeded in linking an individualized patient care approach with the nursing process. They have produced core statements that will guide practitioners and learners to look more carefully at their daily practice. They have established a set of baseline statements and they have successfully demonstrated the differences between the assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation phases of nursing care.

Yet there are certain areas where greater clarity would have been welcomed. Terms such as guidelines, objective, aim and clinical standard are used without prior definition and at times, it would seem, interchangeably. Secondly, it may be incorrect to assume that these guidelines will do away with the need for procedures as is stated in the opening paragraphs of the book. The two may be quite compatible so long as the practitioner knows when and how to use them. Examples of how the objectives are being used would have helped to clarify this. And third, there may be a danger that untutored staff will use the statements as individual goals for patients, thereby negating any advances that this publication obviously wishes to promote.

Alison Kitson
Project Co-ordinator,
Royal College of Nursing,
20 Cavendish Square,
London W1M 0AB.

Pain Control, by J. Latham. Pp. x+106. Austen Cornish, in assoc. with The Lisa Sainsbury Foundation, London, 1987. £6.50.

Jane Latham's book *Pain Control* reinforces the principle that to treat pain effectively, one must first understand the mechanisms of pain.

The preliminary chapters explain the anatomy and physiology of pain, and how pain theories have been developed over the last 300 years that have resulted in 'the gate theory' of pain. These chapters are a little complicated in structure, and I feel that little has been devoted to explaining the important role of the endogenous opiates.

Pain assessment must take into account the physical and psychological state of the patient, and the chapter on the psychological aspects of pain is excellent. A point that is not reinforced is that pain is a symptom. It is vital to diagnose the cause of the symptom since treating the cause appropriately may well be the best way to deal with the pain it is producing.

I am afraid the chapter on analgesics is a little disappointing. We still find analgesics are poorly described by many, and it must always be stated that analgesia must be prescribed correctly, giving regular doses to suppress pain. The author does not stress this point. This criticism may be a little unfair, since I feel this book is directed at persons who already have a knowledge of analgesic prescribing.

The use of the syringe driver, injection techniques for treating pain and transcutaneous nerve stimulation, are then presented in the final 3 chapters.

In summary, it is a useful short volume. It is directed to nurses: however, it is also a useful resource for any professional who treats pain. It is not a book for the 'complete beginner', since it is not a comprehensive book on pain control. However, it would certainly complement other articles and books on pain control and should stimulate the reader.

Adrian Tookman
Royal Free Hospital and
the Edenhall Marie Curie Hospice

Recent Advances in Medicine (20), edited by A.M. Dawson & G.M. Besser. Pp. ix+266, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1987. £19.95.

This volume, number 20 in the series, is the first under the editorship of Dr Dawson and Professor Besser. In their brief preface they pay tribute to Nigel Compston who had been Editor to the Series for 20 years, a tribute which very many will echo.

This volume lives up to the standard of its predecessors. It was the aim of the editors to produce a series of articles that would be of interest and intelligible to the generalist and most achieved that aim. Inevitably, there will be some which the individual reviewer will find dull. The article on the Psychopathology of Civil Disorder sounded interesting, but needs a lot of pruning. Anybody who can write 'however, the natural course of reactions for some individuals tends to chronicity' could do with a tough editor. Only one article was not really intelligible to this generalist, and that was the article by A.L. Harris on 'Neoplasia Oncogenes and Growth Factors'. Fortunately, Sikora and Waxman explained the matter much more clearly in their review of 'New therapeutic strategies in oncology'.

There are excellent articles on growth, gut infections, allergic lung disease, heart failure and Parkinson's disease. It was a pity that the article on organ transplantation did not include a section on marrow transplantation.

Things move so fast these days that it is inevitable that some of the articles will already seem behind the times: thus the article on AIDS was unable to include anything about the use of azidothymidine. However, this is a particularly good summary of the clinical aspects of the problem. It is a pity that it is marred by a distance between the table of the new classification and the text (arabic numbers in the table, Roman numerals in the text; small numbers in the table, letters in the text). The book also includes a useful section on interventional radiology.

All in all, this book can be recommended. The efforts by authors to include modern views on the scientific basis of their subjects was particularly successful. The references are most helpful. This book should be in every hospital library.

P.M.S. Gillam
Postgraduate Medical Centre,
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7SX.

Recollections and Reflections, by Douglas Black. Pp. x+132, illustrated. Cambridge University Press, London, 1987. £14.95.

Sir Douglas Black explains at the outset why he eschewed autobiography in favour of arranging his memories by theme rather than timing. The product is a series of fascinating essays in which his experience in the practice of medicine together with his contributions to its progress are interwoven with perceptions and insights gained while he held a sequence of distinguished appointments: professor of medicine, chief scientist to the DHSS, and President of the Royal College of Physicians.