**Book Reviews**


The publisher’s blurb tells us that both students and professionals of speech pathology and audiology recognize this book as a uniquely important contribution to the field. This second edition ‘as well as being a review of the neuropathies supplies practical guidelines for the selection of techniques for therapeutic intervention and detailed step-by-step therapy tasks that are eclectic and flexible.’ I imagine ‘neuropathies’ refers to brain and neuromuscular diseases causing disordered speech, but, as in many other passages which it contains, the use of plain English is at a premium in this book. One other remark in the blurb causes a similar ironic smile: ‘. . . a new chapter on managing individuals with traumatic closed head injuries.’ The reviewer can’t wait to read the instalment describing non-traumatic head injuries.

These criticisms apart, this is a serious work describing in commendable detail the assessment and attempts at treatment of speech and language disorders. It covers aphasia, the ‘language of confusion’, the language of dementia, apraxia of speech and the dysarthrias. It is replete with clear tables, diagrams and definitions, and provides useful details of specific tests used in assessment and treatment.

Objective appraisal of speech therapy is topical and controversial. In this country several papers have shown that in controlled studies the professional therapist often can achieve little more than a devoted relative instructed briefly to persevere with intensive exercises: repetition, talking, writing and naming objects and drawings. Much depends on the nature and intelligence of the patient. This is borne out in the section on dysarthria (Rosenbek and LaPointe). That the disorders are complex is shown by their analysis into disorders of weakness, tone, incoordination and respiration; these in turn result in abnormalities in phonation, resonance, articulation and in the fashionable prosodic speech. A wide variety of treatment ‘strategies’ are employed, including plastic surgery in some cases; all are clearly described and some indication of their limitations is given. A degree of unwarranted optimism is acceptable – and probably necessary, when confronted by such difficult therapeutic challenges.

The section on aphasia is mainly concerned with the Pitch index of communicative ability (PICA) and with the consequent treatment strategies. It provides no general description of the types and mechanisms of dysphasia, which is assumed. Other chapters deal with both developmental and acquired apraxic disorders of speech.

My impression is that this is a book for the specialist. The depth and detail are impressive, and probably reflect a better established role for speech and language therapists in the USA than exists in this country. Despite the paradoxical difficulties in clear succinct expression, shown in the text, there is much of interest for neurologists, paediatricians and those generalists who take more than cursory notice of these common disorders in their patients.

J.M.S. Pearce
Department of Neurology,
Hull Royal Infirmary,
Hull,
North Humberside HU3 2JZ


This volume consists of 61 papers selected by the editors from a larger number presented at the 14th Congress of the Collegium Internationale Neuro-Psychopharmacologicum in Florence in June 1984. The editors have attempted to group the papers into sections, including those concerned with the affective disorders, anxiety, psychoneuroendocrinology, schizophrenia, Alzheimer’s disease and psychogeriatrics.

If this selection represents the best of those presented, then it has to be said that those omitted must have been of questionable value. Some of the papers included can only be described as abstracts of presentations, and others contain only the most preliminary of results. Several papers are about zimelidine, withdrawn from the UK market because of adverse effects many months ago.

Research psychiatrists may find something of interest to them by browsing through its pages in a library, but it is unlikely to have a wide readership.

Professor Paul Turner
Department of Clinical Pharmacology,
St Bartholomew’s Hospital,
London EC1A 7EB


This question and answer book is an excellent addition to the literature of family planning, because it is not only up-to-date and cheap but also it gives a great deal of information in a quick and readable way. The addition of consumers’ questions helps to make doctors aware of the sorts of anxieties and doubts that are in their patients’ minds. Dr Guillebaud knows his subject well through working in a family planning clinic and has lots of practical ideas to add to his knowledge of research studies and their theoretical aspects. It should be
Clinical Management of Neurogenic Communicative Disorders

J.M.S. Pearce

Postgrad Med J 1986 62: 971
doi: 10.1136/pgmj.62.732.971

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://pmj.bmj.com/content/62/732/971.1.citation

These include:

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/