Book Reviews

Alcoholism and Drug Addiction. Duncan Raistrick and Robin Davidson. *Current Reviews in Psychiatry*. No. 2. Pp. v + 198. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £18.00.

This useful new book presents a highly readable review of a number of key issues related to the use and misuse of alcohol, tobacco, prescribed and illegal drugs. Although the book is specifically designed for those working in psychiatry the authors have succeeded in placing clinical issues in the context of social, economic and political factors.

This review assembles much information that has not previously been available outside specialized and rather inaccessible journals. The issues covered include a review of drug effects, the controversy over goals for problem drinkers (i.e. abstinence vs controlled drinking), the politics of alcohol control policies and a review of preventative strategies. The text is far better than the rather inappropriate old-fashioned title suggests. This book is particularly commendable because it attempts to highlight some of the important similarities between the use and misuse of legal and illegal drugs. This is a timely and appropriate emphasis.

Duncan Raistrick and Robin Davidson are to be congratulated on the lucid way in which they present this review. It is a worthwhile acquisition for anybody concerned with the management of problems related to psychoactive drugs.

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Allergy. Edited by Allen P. Kaplan. Pp. xv + 718, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1985. £80.00.

The stated aim of the editor, Dr Allen Kaplan of New York, was to produce a comprehensive, up-to-date textbook on allergic disease. In his preface, Dr Kaplan acknowledges that 'many other fine textbooks are available, but this one . . . is designed to be different in a variety of ways': it is not, however, noticeably different in its approach or execution.

The 31 chapters have 41 authors: with one exception, all the authors are from North America, the exception being Professor Barry Kay from the Brompton Hospital, London, who wrote a chapter on The Eosinophil.

The book is divided into four sections. The first section, on cellular and molecular mechanisms of allergic disease, deals predictably with such topics as the structure of IgE, the IgE receptor, biochemical mediators, mast cells, eosinophils, complement and the kinin system. Two relevant but unusual contributions (for a book on allergy) discuss the role of cell-mediated responses and the autonomic nervous system in the

pathogenesis of allergic disease; areas that have attracted increasing attention as it became apparent that the features of allergic diseases could not be explained solely by the conventional view of IgE-triggered mast cell degranulation.

The second section, on diagnosis, consists of only four chapters, one chapter deals with skin tests, total IgE and specific IgE antibodies and another with inhalation challenge in asthma. The paucity of available tests is highlighted by the need to bolster this section with a short chapter on pulmonary function tests and a long one on the structure of airborne allergens. The third section consists of 13 chapters on individual disorders while the final section has three contributions on the treatment of allergic diseases by steroids, non-steroidal drugs and immunotherapy.

Overall, the chapters are well written (though with a tendency to verbosity) and lavishly referenced; the lag phase between chapter execution and book publication ensures, however, that while most chapters contain references to work published in 1983 there is only an occasional reference from 1984. The price of the book places it beyond the pocket of most individuals but this is a well-produced and comprehensive textbook that is recommended for purchase by post-graduate medical libraries.

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Anaesthesia for Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Surgery, Second edition, J.D. Morrison, R.K. Mirakhur and H.J.L. Craig. Pp. vii + 210, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £25.00.

In recent years, the move towards sub-specialization has affected anaesthesia no less than other disciplines. This trend has been reflected in an increasing number of specialist publications. *Anaesthesia for Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Surgery* falls into this category, and is intended both for trainee anaesthetists, and for established practitioners who wish to refresh their knowledge. The format of the book is essentially practical. ENT surgery is discussed largely in terms of the operative site (e.g. larynx, nose, ear), with each chapter encompassing a brief survey of the relevant anatomy, explanation of the commoner surgical procedures, and a discussion of appropriate methods of anaesthesia (including local anaesthetic techniques, although these find little application in the United Kingdom). Management of trauma to the head and neck, and the techniques of controlled hypotension, which are of particular relevance in ENT surgery, are awarded separate chapters. Ophthalmic surgery is approached in similar fashion. Operative procedures are divided into intra- and extra-ocular, with a separate section devoted to retinal detachment and vitrectomy. Overall, this book provides a succinct and practical guide to anaesthesia

for most eye and ENT surgery, with the chapter on controlled hypotension being particularly notable for its clarity and relevance.

Nonetheless, some criticisms can be made. For example, it was surprising to see no comment about malignant hyperpyrexia in the section on squint surgery. Although rare, this condition is associated with strabismus, a consideration which might influence anaesthetic technique. Similarly, the association of ptosis with dystrophia myotonica is not mentioned. These seem inappropriate omissions in a textbook of specialist anaesthetic practice. There are scattered minor errors and misprints ('phosphorous' for 'phosphate' on page 46, for example), and in places, the prose style leaves something to be desired.

Is this book likely to appeal to its intended readers? The experienced anaesthetist would probably gain relatively little, but most trainees would benefit from reading it. That said, how many of them are likely to part with £25.00 for a relatively small area of anaesthetic knowledge, with so many other claims on their purses (and time)? *Anaesthesia for Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Surgery* is a book perhaps best suited to the departmental library, rather than to individual purchase.

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Anaesthesia: Review 3. Edited by Leon Kaufman. Pp. viii + 216, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £14.00.

The third volume of Kaufman's Review is a welcome addition to any anaesthetist's library. Some nineteen authors contribute seventeen reviews of topics ranging from opioid receptors and endorphins to the practical problems seen in obstetric and neurosurgical anaesthesia. I particularly enjoyed the contributions from Dr Branthwaite on cardiac risks and complications and Dr Armstrong on burns and inhalation injury.

The order of the book follows that seen in the first. Thus starting with the first chapter it comes as a surprise to read the introductory topic – respiratory function in colitis. One other surprise is Dr White's introduction of the term 'eduction' as the inverse of induction. Where dealing with single inhalational anaesthetics, I would prefer speed of onset and of recovery.

The book makes splendid bedside reading and will be useful for those involved in the examinations – as examinees, teachers and examiners.

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Brain's Diseases of the Nervous System. Ninth edition. Sir John Walton. Oxford Medical Publications. Pp. xi + 701, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, Tokyo, 1985. £45.00.

The first edition of Russell Brain's Diseases of the Nervous System appeared in 1933. In its review in the journal of the same name, one of the senior neurologists of the day wrote: . . . 'when Gowers wrote his still unequalled *Textbook of Nervous Diseases*, the author prepared himself for his task by a long apprenticeship in the practice of medicine . . . he wrote because he had something to impart and not simply because there was room on the market for a book on his subject. His book crystallized his own experience. It was not a compilation'. The reviewer, having thus made his point went on . . . 'More important than these criticisms of detail is the doubt we must feel about the book's purpose. It provides too much and too indiscriminately for the practitioner, too little and too superficially for the neurologist. The figures are of unequal merit and on the whole inadequate. Nothing has been missed and the result is rather a concise encyclopaedia than a working guide to neurology. Anatomy and physiology too have been treated at unusual length, though even the most ardent advocate of such a formulation to clinical neurology would admit that much of both these subjects is of purely academic interest and lacks practical application'. In spite of this review in *Brain* (the journal), *Brain* (the book) survived six editions and after the death of Brain (Lord) in 1966, the seventh edition came out revised by John Walton. In this, the 1985 ninth edition of the original book he has at last established his own right to the authorship of what I think is a most magnificent book on the subject and one which is also a pleasure to handle. It is the more remarkable in that it is the work of one man.

The general pathophysiological and anatomical aspects of Disorders of the Nervous System are covered in detail in both the early chapters and in the specific sections. The 1985 references include those to AIDS and MPTP though these are not listed in the index!

The reviewer cannot think of any other worthwhile criticisms and recommends this monumental book, without reservations, to established neurologists, postgraduate students of medicine and those undergraduates who have an interest in the subject. The bulk of this text will not age. Incidentally the cost, £45.00 (1986) compares favourably with £17.6. (1933), the 701 pages having a two-column format, compared with the original 899 pages.

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Consultation in General Surgery. Randolph B. Reinhold. Medical Consultation Series. Pp. v + 295, illustrated. B.C. Decker, Philadelphia, Toronto, C.V. Mosby, Saint Louis, Toronto, London, 1985. £19.00 (spinal binding).

In the foreword of this book *Consultation in General Surgery* Dr Kassirer states that a consultant is asked for specific