

quality. The line drawings adjacent to the photographs further clarify the points each plate illustrates. The author may remain amongst a minority of practitioners by preferring to introduce the fiberoptic bronchoscope via the rigid instrument or through an endotracheal tube, and preferably under general anaesthesia. However, the more commonly used routes with topical anaesthesia are very clearly discussed. The timely reminder that a bronchoscopist should be equally familiar with both the flexible and the rigid instruments is once again welcome. This book remains a richly informative work and should be compulsory reading for anybody wishing to become involved with bronchoscopy.

STEPHEN G. SPIRO
Brompton Hospital,
London SW3 6HP.

Family Planning; Fundamentals for Health Professionals

By ANN COWPER and CYRIL YOUNG. Pp. 160, illustrated. Croom Helm, London, 1981. £11.95 (hardback) £5.95 (paperback).

The fundamentals of family planning are presented in this book in a basic and readable manner. It is orientated towards the provision of a service in the clinic situation and within the U.K., but does not emphasize sufficiently the importance of the team approach of all those working therein.

Although designed to cover the syllabus set for Course 900 of the Joint Board of Clinical Nursing Studies, it would be insufficient by itself adequately to equip postgraduate nurses to undertake delegation duties for doctors. Fortunately, the second stated aim of the authors, to stimulate interest in further reading, is fulfilled and a good bibliography is included for this purpose.

After dealing briefly with facilities for sex education and contraceptive advice in the first chapter, the next is devoted to 'Body Mechanics'. This is a simplified summary of relevant anatomy and physiology, supported by surprisingly old-fashioned illustrations.

Bearing in mind that the authors state that 'good family planning nurses ought not to be weighed down by facts inessential to good contraceptive practice', the excellent chapter on Infection of the Reproductive Organs would seem excessively detailed, especially concerning the medical treatment involved, for nurses. While unquestionably important, the length of this chapter and its early situation in the book creates a false impression of the frequency with which sexually transmitted disease is confronted in a family planning clinic.

After discussing clinic organization and cervical smear testing, at last the essential chapters are reached and deal with contraceptive methods, sterilization and unplanned pregnancy.

The description of the methods and their prescription are regrettably over-simplified and not always strictly accurate. The section on the use of injectables could be seriously misleading. There is little reference to the importance of risk/benefit considerations, so important nowadays if methods are to be used without anxiety, and some controversial points are presented dogmatically without discussion or justification.

There is a most helpful chapter dealing with women with special needs including the young, the infertile, the older woman and those with psychosexual problems. The many and widespread ramifications of work in this field are thereby highlighted and the need for sensitive understanding of individuals stressed.

At £5.95 for a paperback this is an expensive book and is not sufficiently comprehensive for those doctors who intend

to provide a contraceptive service. It would be useful, however, for some paramedical health professionals.

BARBARA LAW
Whittington Hospital,
London N19 5NF.

Introduction to Clinical Pharmacology

By M. J. EADIE, J. H. TYRER and F. BOCHNER, Pp. vi + 142, illustrated. M.T.P. Press Lancaster, 1981. £5.95.

This book aims to link preclinical and clinical studies in pharmacology and to introduce the principles which underlie rational drug use. The book begins with chapters on the passage of drugs through cell membranes and body fluids, drug action and receptors, biotransformation and the distribution of drugs. There then follow chapters on drug excretion, pharmacokinetics, interactions and adverse drug reactions and on drug dosage and its modification.

Although the intentions stated in the preface are admirable, the book fails to transmit enthusiasm for the subject and the authors have missed the opportunity to enliven the text with the sort of individual clinical case histories which would help emphasize the important points that they make.

R. M. PEARSON
Dept of Clinical Pharmacology,
St. Bartholomew's Medical College,
London EC1A 7BE.

1200 Multiple Choice Questions in Pharmacology

By R. W. FOSTER. Pp. xi + 176. Butterworths, London, Boston, 1980. £3.50.

The Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) technique has become part of the university scene, the students usually (being more adaptable?) accepting them in their stride with some dons less ready to assimilate this technique into examinations. Dons in medical schools where the emphasis is on classes of 150 to 250 students, however, see MCQs as an important device assisting students in testing their own knowledge and assisting staff to identify 'weak' students. Such 'weak' students can then be counselled and that scarce resource—academic tutoring—directed to 'salvaging' the weaker who are in danger of floundering or, worse still, foundering on the rocks in their academic course.

This slim volume entitled: '1200 Multiple Choice Questions in Pharmacology' is under the editorship of Dr R. W. Foster and distills the accumulated experience of many of the staff of the Department of Pharmacology, Materia Medica and Therapeutics in the University of Manchester.

In their Preface, the authors state that they offer a selection of MCQs in pharmacology which they hope may be found useful in four different ways, namely as a source of ready-made questions for use by examiners; a source of ideas which may aid examiners in the construction of new questions; an aid to candidates in practising multiple choice examination technique; a means by which students can assess their own progress in acquiring pharmacological knowledge.

It is axiomatic that the setting of MCQs is a time-consuming process and the authors stress that they have debated, amended, tested and reviewed the responses to these questions over the last 6 years. It is only by constant review of the responses to MCQs that the stems and options can evolve to maximise discrimination.

Nine types of MCQ are defined clearly before the reader passes to the MCQs. In each section of the book, MCQs of the same type are grouped together so that the reader can

answer each batch using the relevant technique. I am uncertain whether the change from type to type through each section is altogether satisfactory, but it does provide experience in different methods which would stimulate mental agility.

The book is divided into 7 sections with the correct answers grouped on the last few pages. The first section embraces Autonomic Pharmacology, including skeletal muscle, local anaesthetics and anti-arrhythmics. The second includes digoxin and diuretics with endocrine pharmacology. The next covers reproductive pharmacology while the fourth deals with central nervous system pharmacology. The fifth section involves cancer chemotherapy and human anti-parasitic chemotherapy (a rather neglected field). The sixth is on drug disposition and metabolism. The last section is devoted to applied pharmacology. While most MCQs are conventional in presentation, graphs, diagrams and problems are occasionally used. Some questions in all sections are easy to answer while others provide severe tests and some are very difficult and require a highly specialized knowledge, but the mix is about right so that the student may see the panorama of MCQs for which he may be at risk.

If used systematically, the student should be able to practise answering MCQs and to monitor his knowledge of pharmacology and be able to pick out areas of weakness which could be corrected by consulting a text book.

For the university teacher this book provides a large and diverse collection of MCQs which can be used as a source of MCQs and it also engenders stimulation and inspiration leading to the construction of new MCQs for local examination purposes.

At £3.50, this book represents a 'good buy' alike for medical and dental students and for academic staff interested in medical pharmacology.

J. P. QUILLIAM
Dept of Pharmacology,
The Medical College
of St Bartholomew's Hospital,
London EC1M 6BQ.

An Outline of Energy Metabolism in Man

By GORDON L. ATKINS. Pp. 96, illustrated. William Heinemann Medical Books, London, 1981. £4.95.

The reviewer approached this little book with considerable reserve. Intermediate metabolism is, to coin a phrase, a well ploughed field. Complex metabolic charts have become major allergens to anybody working in or on the fringes of biochemical medicine. Lecture notes rarely if ever transform into readable books. "Energy metabolism" sounds slightly pretentious. None of these forebodings were in fact, justified.

This is an excellent summary of current teaching of human biochemistry—not perhaps bedside reading but clear, well balanced and exceptionally well focused on essentials. The last attribute is particularly rare. The charts are built up gradually and logically instead of assailing the eye and mind with a jumble of arrows, crosses, circles, dotted lines, bold arcs and minuscule print. The fact that the origin of the book was a series of lecture notes (for anaesthetists working for the FFA RCS Part I—most of them, one imagines, aglow at the prospect of forgetting all about energy metabolism as soon as the exam is over) does, of course, show: the tone is brisk and dogmatic and conveys little of the uncertainty that still surrounds much of the subject. But there is room for such an approach. And the title, if not perhaps quite accurate, is justified by the author's interpretation of biochemical reactions and pathways in terms of energy turnover. This is a real advance over most current teaching texts and has a welcome unifying effect. It might, who knows, even spark off

real interest in some of his non-biochemical readers to whom the subject might otherwise seem to have been designed for the sole purpose of obstructing their clinical progress to the stars. The book has been pleasingly produced and printed and it is by no means unreasonably priced. A useful publication.

T. L. DORMANDY
Whittington Hospital,
London N19 5NF.

Problems in Respiratory Medicine

By PAUL FORGACS. Problems in Practice Series. Pp. 158, illustrated. M.T.P. Press, Lancaster, 1981. £7.95.

Dr Paul Forgacs' book *Problems in Respiratory Medicine* proves a worthy addition to other books published in this series, relating to various specialities. The author has already established a reputation for himself as one who has clarified the symptoms and clinical signs in chest medicine that we may now all speak a common language when we refer to crackles and wheezes.

The book deals mainly with the common chest diseases and mentions the more obscure only when dealing with differential diagnoses. I found the marginal headings very helpful, as I think they would be to GPs when scanning the pages.

The detail is adequate and the straightforward prose makes the book eminently readable. The diagrams are simple and the tables uncluttered with detail.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book not only for GPs but as an introduction to chest medicine for medical students.

H. O. WILLIAMS
Whittington Hospital,
London N19 5NF.

Respiratory Medicine

By DAVID C. FLENLEY. Baillière's Concise Medical Textbooks. Pp. 263, illustrated. Baillière Tindall, London, 1981. £6.50 (paperback).

One can find few faults with this excellent book, except, perhaps, to regret that Professor Flenley did not write it earlier. It admirably fulfils its objective of providing a short text book of respiratory medicine; bridging the gap between the respiratory chapters of general medical text books and the more comprehensive specialist works. In places, this book seems to provide rather more information than the specialist publications, particularly with respect to practical details of treatment. Although written in a condensed style, it is very readable and not without the occasional dash of humour.

The bulk of a volume of this size must, of course, be devoted to the important, common conditions, such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and bronchial carcinoma. Accounts of these subjects are very up to date. The author confesses to a dogmatic approach but, nevertheless, succeeds in giving a balanced view of current research and opinion. The diversity of the literature on the immunology and pathogenesis of conditions such as emphysema is condensed into very clear accounts, sometimes supported by useful diagrams. The book is liberally illustrated with line drawings, many of them devoted to interpretation of chest X-rays. There are also a few diagrams of CT scans of the thorax, which are now increasingly used in chest medicine.

As one would expect from this author, the physiological background is very adequately covered in the opening chapters. I was pleased to see that a significant amount of space was given to symptoms and interpretation of physical signs. This seems most appropriate in view of the frequent difficulty which undergraduate and postgraduate students alike