be daunted when he turns to this text. Perhaps he may be forgiven for wondering, in this world teeming with xenobiotics, how any child at all manages to be born and to develop with any semblance of normality. From the research findings cited, the odds would seem to be against this ever happening. The sheer facility with which many of the tests can be executed has its dangers, notably in trying to interpret the expanding host of positive findings to the holistic, human situation. More dangerously, too, isolated discoveries in tissue culture, biochemical mechanisms, developmental carcinogenicity and so on, may easily be lifted out of context by those, maybe, not over-endowed with scientific integrity emotionally then to condemn one, or other, particular agent on the grounds that there is evidence to show that it deforms the foetus, or little children! The constraints in this respect might have been a little more emphasized.

In all, then, this is a book which will be highly informative to the scientific specialist rather than to the general run of medical readers.

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Examination Notes in Psychiatry

By JONATHAN BIRD and GLYNN HARRISON. Pp. 278. John Wright, PSG Inc., Boston, Bristol and London, 1982. £7.50.

This is an ambitious book, since it claims to be a guide to the content of the Membership Examination of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and equivalent examinations. The book contains some 25 chapters, with conventional headings such as Schizophrenia, Affective Disorders, Neurotic Disorders, Drug Therapy etc. Each chapter is composed of a series of brief notes in telegraphic English, very much in the style of lecture notes. They are intended to serve as reminders about something that the reader has previously learned. In addition, at the end of each chapter are a small number of key references. The fact that a significant proportion of these references are from the British Journal of Hospital Medicine indicates that the level of discourse that is attempted is practical rather than academic.

If the book is used in the spirit which the authors intend, i.e. as a way of organizing information already learned, and as a convenient way of revision for somebody who has already done a good deal of ground work, then it will serve a very useful purpose. However, there are two dangers in producing a volume of this nature. First, it may be quite wrongly regarded as a syllabus for the examination of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The authors make no pretence that this is the case, but naive or unwary postgraduate students may presume this, simply because of its convenience and its comprehensive coverage. Second, it may be regarded by the less industrious as a basic source of information in itself and used as a substitute for a more comprehensive literature. It could thus become a source of lists to be learnt, parrot-fashion, without a proper understanding of the underlying content.

This book will probably be popular with psychiatric trainees for the next year or two, although it may well soon run into the problem of not being up-to-date. Presumably, the authors will provide fairly frequent up-dating of the information. It could well be that clinical tutors will have the main responsibility for ensuring that this book is used by trainees to the best advantage. Examiners in the Membership examination of the Royal College will also, no doubt, be keeping an eye open for the mechanical repetition of lists and phrases found within it.

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Human Herpesvirus Infections. Clinical Aspects

Edited by RONALD GLASER and TAMAR GOTLIEB-STEMATSKY. Infectious Diseases and Antimicrobial Agents/2. Pp. 280, illustrated. Marcel Dekker, New York, 1982. Sw.Fr.105.00.

Herpes virus infections have been a subject of great interest in recent

years and considerable advances have been made in understanding their pathogenesis and, to some extent, also in their treatment, so this multi-author book about clinical aspects of human herpes virus infections is timely. It contains 6 reviews by eminent American workers with one chapter on each of the herpes viruses affecting man, with the exception of Epstein-Barr virus which gets 2 chapters, and there is a concluding chapter on therapy and prevention.

Each review is comprehensive in its way, but there is variation in the type of subject matter chosen. Varicella-zoster virus is particularly well covered, but the chapter about herpes simplex infections shows a considerable bias towards type 2 infection and is weak on type 1 with, for example, little about the major difficulties surrounding herpes encephalitis. Even the association between genital infection with type 2 virus and neonatal disease receives only brief mention.

There is also a slight imbalance in the chapters on Epstein-Barr virus infection with an excellent and highly comprehensive section on neurological complications, but little about other clinical manifestations. However, there is an authoritative chapter from G. and W. Henle on the serology of Epstein-Barr virus infection.

For a book about clinical aspects of these infections, there are very few illustrations, but this is more than compensated for by the number of references. Overall it is a useful book for postgraduates and it is relevant to specialists in several different fields.

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The Pathogenesis of Infectious Disease

By C. A. MIMS. 2nd edn. Pp. ix + 297, illustrated. Academic Press, London, 1982. £11.80 (\$22.00).

This is an updating of a well established book. It deals with the entry of microorganisms into the body of the host and with the events which follow: phagocytosis, spread, immune responses, mechanisms of cell and tissue damage, culminating in recovery or failure to eliminate the organism. There are thoughtful sections on microbial strategies in relation to immune responses, on factors influencing susceptibility, and on vaccines.

Each chapter is followed by a brief reference list, leaving the text uncluttered. This contributes to the book's great readability, but makes it more difficult to identify the source of some of the statements. That is perhaps not of much consequence in an undergraduate text, but somewhat diminishes its value to trainees in pathology and microbiology. It should still be read by them because of its unfailing interest and its unceasing stream of stimulating ideas. If Professor Mims lectures as he writes, his students are very fortunate. This book should be in every medical library.

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Recent Advances in Endocrinology and Metabolism

Edited by J. L. H. O'RIORDAN. Pp. 333, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, 1982. £18.00.

It is appropriate that this book is dedicated to Dr John (now Sir John) Nabarro, Physician and Endocrinologist at the Middlesex Hospital (1954-1981), whose valuable contributions to the field of clinical endocrinology spanned almost 3 decades. Jeffrey O'RIORDAN has gathered together a distinguished team of clinicians and basic scientists to outline some of the major recent advances in endocrinology and metabolism. Leslie Rees and R. Smith provide a useful update on the endogenous opiates, a field in which the Barts group have made so many important developments. The chapter by S. Bloom and T. Adrian on gut hormones and neuropeptides highlights the major new work in this field, stressing the close relationship of these apparently disparate groups of chemical messengers. The complex field of the somatomedins, a new group of tissue growth factors, is gradually being clarified. Deborah Doniach and Franco Bottazzo discuss their pioneering work on autoimmunity and the

relation of the HLA system to endocrine disease. Paul Franchimont again reveals his clarity of thought in his chapter on the gonadotrophins. Christopher Edwards and his colleagues provide a chapter blending basic biochemistry and clinical applications in dealing with the renin-angiotensin and aldosterone system. Hendy and Kronenberg outline the role of recombinant DNA technology in the field of endocrinology. The pioneers of the cytochemical bioassay, Chayen and Bitensky, give a critical state of the art account of the field they developed. Roger Ekins shows his mastery of the field of free hormones in a scholarly review of the different models of hormone delivery.

All in all, a book for the connoisseur, which I would commend both to the clinician updating his basic knowledge and to the basic scientist exploring the clinical applications of his methodology.

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Sex Problems in Practice

Articles from the British Medical Journal. Pp. 81. British Medical Association, London, 1982. £4.00.

When I was a medical student 30 plus years ago, sexual problems belonged either to the VD clinic or the department of psychiatry. 'Ordinary' doctors, even most gynaecologists, had nothing to do with this part of living. Times and attitudes have both changed and the medical profession now regards psychosexual counselling as one of its roles.

Patients with sexual problems may go to one of the clinics set up for this purpose, but very frequently they turn first to their GP and therefore, it is appropriate that the first 2 chapters of this excellent little book should be on what the GP can do and how he can recognize that the problem might exist. 'Let the Patient Talk' is the first sub-heading in the chapter on diagnosing sexual problems in general practice, which may sound obvious to the *cognoscenti*, but still needs to be learned by doctors trained to ask questions.

There are chapters on impotence in its various forms, including vaginismus and premature ejaculation, as well as how to deal with the fear of failure. There is a chapter on the whole question of training and referral, very important in what is to many of us a new field and not covered by the normal outpatient departments to which we are accustomed. There are 2 chapters on homosexuality, including lesbianism, and the book finishes with a chapter on iatrogenic sex problems, more common than we sometimes realize, and the difficulties faced by those with a physical disability.

All in all, a book to be strongly recommended, well written and short enough to be readable. There can be no substitute for experience if a physician wishes to become an expert in this field, but for most of us, this book constitutes an excellent introduction.

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Sociology as Applied to Medicine

Edited by D. L. PATRICK and G. SCAMBLER. Pp. xiv + 255, illustrated. Bailliere Tindall, London, 1982. £6.50 (himp).

Sociology is a relatively new subject in the medical and nursing curriculum. This has led to a difficult problem for teachers of the subject who must aim at imparting a sound grasp of sociological concepts to students who are expected to cope with an increasingly crowded curriculum. Such students may not have time to consider the more detailed aspects of the subject or to study any of the more comprehensive text books. The authors of this volume have therefore aimed at providing a readable and concise introduction to some of the principle areas of concern in sociology and to consider their application to medical practice.

The text is clear and provides adequate and up-to-date references. Many of the problems discussed in this volume are inevitably

controversial and alternative view points are presented in a lively and stimulating manner.

The initial chapters of the book are concerned with concepts of health and illness and the impact of social factors on the individual's health and wellbeing. Other chapters discuss illness behaviour and the sick role, doctor-patient relationships and problems of communication in medical practice. These provide valuable insights for students, particularly in medicine where their previous experience may be limited to an organic concept of disease based on a study of anatomy and physiology. Other areas which receive attention include important problems such as death and dying, the special health problems of ethnic minority groups and of the elderly.

The final section of the book discusses some aspects of medicine as an instrument of social control. Some of the views expressed may be uncomfortable for students of medicine to read about; it is, however, vital, if doctors are to play a role in promoting health as well as curing disease, that they have some insight into aspects of professional behaviour both in relation to the health service itself and in their dealings with individual patients. Chapters dealing with the concepts of deviance, labelling and stigmatization are clearly set out and here again a difficult subject is dealt with clearly and with sensitivity. The final chapters deal with the measurement and evaluation of health care. The scales used by social scientists for measurement are explained and the problems associated with measurement of concepts such as discomfort, dissatisfaction and disability are described. The imperative to evaluate health care, both in the light of the growth of medical science and technology, and in the growth of expenditure on health services is stressed, as is the necessity to define objectives if any meaningful evaluation is to be attempted.

The expressed aim of the book, to provide topics for further study and discussion and to remain of manageable size, has been remarkably successful in presenting much information in a very concise and stimulating format.

This book should provide an excellent introduction to sociology as applied to medicine and should be of value, not only to students in medicine and other health professions, but also consultants and family practitioners who increasingly find themselves called upon to explain their own patterns of behaviour which we have long taken for granted.

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Surgical Pathology of the Nervous System and its Coverings

By PETER C. BURGER and F. STEPHEN VOGEL. 2nd edn. Pp. xiii + 739, illustrated. John Wiley, New York, Chichester, 1982. £50.58.

Just as a reader will select a book for a specific purpose, so should authors decide the audience for whom they have written, in order to direct their work appropriately. Drs Burger and Vogel have written a very useful book, but it does show some confusion of purpose.

They have concisely described and have clearly illustrated almost all the common lesions of the brain and spinal cord that are likely to impinge on the surgeon and his pathologist colleague (with the partial exception of trauma, infarcts, and aneurysms) and have even managed a section on the peripheral nerves. Accordingly, the book is divided by anatomical region and then by major disease type. The text is concise and lucid and the illustrations, often multiple, of macroscopic and histological appearances, are admirably clear and to the point. As a catalogue and atlas, pathologists in particular should be grateful for the extensive display of lesions. However, that is all, and there is no real attempt to discuss and illustrate pathogenetic mechanisms and their consequences, only to show diagnostic features. There is a remarkably extensive and up-to-date reference list to the English literature after each section, which is far more detailed than the text.

The best feature of the book is the illustrations, which should make it desirable to pathologists, but they really deserve more about