Book Reviews

Annual Review of Immunology, Vol. 2, edited by William E. Paul, C. Garrison Fathman, Henry Metzger. Pp. 560, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1984. \$27.00 (U.S.A.), \$30.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.

Dr John Humphrey introduces this series of reviews with an amusing autobiographical essay entitled 'Serendipity in Immunology'. The remaining 19 chapters document the current status of all the major research areas of immunology ranging from the well established topics of complement and antigenicity to the newer interests in interleukins and gene transfection.

The overall standard of the contributions is high, but some deserve particular attention. Schlossman and co-workers derive the first unifying model of the T cell antigen receptor. Snyderman discusses the nature of the leucocyte chemoattractant receptor and the biochemical basis of the transduction of the receptor signal to chemotactic, oxidative and secretory responses. In another chapter, interleukin 2 (IL2) and its receptor are characterized and attention is drawn to the possible relevance of these to T cell malignancies. A major new review of natural killer (NK) cell research is given by Herberman and a chapter on macrophage activation explores a broader definition of the concept of 'activation' by considering the up- and down-regulation of various membrane and intracellular capacities.

The proposed role of the eosinophil in containing inflammation following immediate type hypersensitivity reactions is questioned by new evidence in man and guinea pigs; an active role for this cell in the bronchial damage of asthma is suggested. A section dealing with complement highlights the *in vivo* importance of erythrocyte complement receptors in phagocytosis and describes the complex characteristics of complement activation by different bacteria.

This book will be of particular interest to those embarking upon specialist laboratory based research in immunology.

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Clinical Manual of Health Assessment, Second edition. Arden C. Bowers & June M. Thompson. Pp. vii + 644, illustrated. C.V. Mosby, St Louis, Toronto, Princeton, 1984. £24.00.

In the attic, among my memorabilia, there must be a white coat. It is my first, carefully preserved, purchased in the meat market for about 10 shillings the day I became a clinical student. I would have stopped wearing it and bought a new one, not because it needed cleaning (which I expect it did) but because the pockets were torn. Without a pocket I could not go on to the wards because it would have contained my copy of 'Clinical Methods' or 'Essentials of Medical Diagnosis' and without one of these, clerking a patient was impossible. They set out clearly the rules for taking a history and examining a patient systematically – with a view to making a diagnosis or the appropriate investigations where necessary.

These books and my training were orientated towards the sick patient. The Clinical Manual of Health Assessment is orientated towards the well, possibly sick, 'client'. Its emphasis is on normal findings, rather than physical sign; on the background history rather than symptom specific questions, although these are adequately covered. It also notes variations in the child and elderly subject concentrating on normal development and the natural ageing process.

It claims to be 'holistic' in its approach – by that it means that it covers all aspects of a person's health – not just those that might be related to a symptom or an unhealthy habit. It is aimed at the student, 'learning health assessment'. How suitable is it for the clinical student?

The body of the book is devoted to the assessment of each system – beginning with historical items in general and specific symptoms in particular. For each system surface anatomy is demonstrated, and almost every page is excellently illustrated. Instructions on inspection, palpation, percussion and auscultation are given – but not necessarily in that order. For instance, in the examination of the abdomen it deals with auscultation before palpation and percussion which seems odd.

Most pages are divided into three columns. The first gives the characteristic to be examined, the second the normal appearance, and the third gives deviations for the normal. These categories apply only to the text and not the photographs. I spent a few confusing minutes looking at the photograph of male distributed pubic hair in the 'deviation from normal' column, thinking it