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