and the degree to which the editors have selected contributions without too many diversions from the main theme. Chapters on ethics and cuts (actually 'Retrenchment and Values in a Health Organisation') and on Hungarian Health Care are particularly topical and relevant. Sadly it takes the Hungarian contributor to point out that health slogans are empty words when billions are starving, millions face death from starvation, while power and energy are wasted on weaponry. At this point some of the debate seems self-indulgent. The weakness of the book's structure and content is its lack of depth. There is a re-run of familiar themes such as the definition of health, the idea of 'need' as a value (not a fact) or QALYs (quality adjusted life years) but this is not the book you would choose to study these issues. Surprisingly there is no exploration of distributive justice, or indeed of justice as a value at all, except in so far as it is subsumed under 'social autonomy'. Even in a collection that does not aim to be comprehensive this is a strange omission. The structure and content of this book have much of interest but are undermined by the poor literary style. Take this example: 'The moral principle prescribing responsibility for the weaknesses of others is to be explained by reference to the basic constraint of human communal life.' The meaning is actually simple and requires no technical jargon: it is rendered almost incomprehensible. And there is lots of it. One looks forward to the promised future volumes, but pleads that they will be more readable.

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Complications of Fractures and Dislocations. Phillip M. Segelov. Pp. 382, illustrated. Chapman and Hall Medical, London, 1990. Hardback £50.

This book portrays one surgeon's approach to the prevention and management of complications of fractures. The author has placed before us his life's experience and that is commendable and should be of significant educational value to the practising and training surgeon. There are multiple illustrations with excellent drawings. The text is extremely clear and in each section the treatment is highlighted in bold type. However, the sub-heading of the injury being treated is in small type and it is often difficult to know what is being treated, especially when the small sub-heading appears on the previous page. The placement of the illustrations is unsatisfactory as they may appear several pages after the relevant text. Some illustrations are labelled incorrectly and I would disagree with some of the comments made, e.g. I believe a plate should be placed on the tension side of a fracture not on the compression side. Also in arthrodesis of the shoulder the supporting plate should be placed on the posterior aspect and not the anterior. There are some obvious omissions from a text which is trying to cover the field of fractures, e.g. intertrochanteric fractures show problems encountered with obsolete fixation systems, but there is no illustration of a sliding compression screw and plate. Little mention is made of the displaced proximal phalangeal fracture, the fracture of the outer third of the clavicle and in the discussion of carpal tunnel release the motor branch of the median

nerve is not mentioned.

I feel that for the practising orthopaedic surgeon and the trainee this text is rather light and does not cover the subject in sufficient depth. No references are given and all the comments are based purely on the surgeon's own experience. At the end of each chapter references are given for further reading but are not specifically referred to in the text. This book makes interesting reading for all those involved in the treatment of fractures but it could not be regarded as a text to solve the complications arising from fractures, as the title indeed suggests.

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Essentials of Experimental Surgery. J.S.P. Lumley, C.J. Green, P. Lear and J.E. Angell-James. Pp. viii + 262, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1990. £45.00

With the increasing controversy regarding research in animals this book takes on increasing importance. It is designed as a practical guide to all workers undertaking animal surgery. Primarily it is directed to individuals in research but is also of value for veterinary practice. The emphasis throughout is on the use of the minimal number of animals and only under those circumstances when alternative methods are inappropriate.

The book is extremely well written and illustrated. The current legislation involving different types of procedures and safe-guards is thoroughly discussed and should be understood by all interested individuals. There are excellent chapters relating to the choice of animal as well as animal husbandry and the principles and practicalities of anaesthesia in the many different species. Although standard surgical techniques are described, the modifications required for animal studies are illustrated as well as both tissue and regional surgery. The final chapters relate to the utilization of tissue and aspects of microscopy, histological staining and immunological investigation as well as the full range of biological measurements.

There is no doubt that this book should be made available to all individuals involved in experimental surgery.

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Medical Statistics: a Commonsense Approach. Michael J. Campbell and David Machin. Pp. xii + 172, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto, Singapore, 1990. £9.95.

This is an inexpensive and easily read book which complements other widely available texts. It has novel layout which leaves textual descriptions of statistical tests to the Appendix and this allows the reader to understand the place of each method.

Study design is wisely stressed by the authors and I particularly enjoyed this chapter; it minimised tests and clarified the importance of common sense. It is equally