Book Reviews

International Perspectives in Schizophrenia, edited by Malcolm Weller. Pp. 327, illustrated. John Libbey, London, Paris, 1990. Hardback £40.00.

This collection of reports of 'exciting developments in the conceptualization and treatment of schizophrenia' is based, with some additions, on two conferences for mixed audiences, including sufferers and their relatives, organized in London in 1988 under the auspices of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship. There are 54 contributors to 27 chapters under the broad headings of biology, genetics, pharmacology (19 chapters) and, to preclude undue imbalance, epidemiology and social (8 chapters). However, the flavour is organic – the words psychodynamic and unconscious do not appear in the fairly brief index. This emphasis, rightly or wrongly, probably accurately reflects the main thrust of current endeavours, and exciting many of them are. After years of fruitless searching by morbid anatomists, one of the most dramatic advances is the identification of pathological anatomical lesions in various areas of the left temporal lobe. These accord with the clinical and physiological findings in epilepsy and chronic psychosis as outlined by Trimble. An attempt is made by Roberts to link these anatomical lesions with reductions in cholecystokinin octapeptide and the frequency of 'negative' symptoms in the clinical picture. This may have greater explanatory power than the dopamine hypothesis which, after holding the stage for some decades, is now generally accepted as having definite limitations. Liddle makes a case for different clinical pictures having different anatomical loci. The evidence for a strong genetic component in schizophrenia is now incontrovertible and Kety reviews the findings from the Danish adoptee studies which have done so much to clarify the nature–nurture debate. Molecular biology is now making a fundamental impact on the understanding of the 'functional' psychoses – so called because for so long no pathology could be identified – and Gurling *et al.* describe the first successful localization of a susceptibility gene. Crow writes on the concept of integrated viral genes as potential pathogens in the functional psychoses. However, as Jablensky points out, there has as yet been no critical breakthrough in therapy but he gives grounds for reasonable optimism in treatment if social and psychological measures are combined with optimum drug therapy all individually tailored to each patient.

Pending such a breakthrough, of great concern to everyone in the UK is the gloomy picture painted by Weller based on his Christmastime studies in London of how our current social policy is working. The chapters on new directions in pharmacology and social aspects are also good. No one attempts a final synthesis – wisely, for there are still many unresolved problems and uncertainties – not least that of case definitions well illustrated in the opening chapters by Weller and Davison. Another puzzling feature of the disease(s) of which Reveley reminds us, is that of the great deal of variability within any biological or other measure examined. However despite these caveats the hope may now be here that such a Nobel Prize winning synthesis must come. Whether the

race to the finishing post turns out to be a sprint, a marathon or a multidisciplinary medley relay will be for some future historian to disentangle. Whilst the historical task may prove difficult it will pale into insignificance compared to teasing out the tangled skein of schizophrenia.

The book is good reading for psychiatrists and researchers and every psychiatric library should have a copy. So should the libraries of district general hospitals with a psychiatric unit. M.R.C.Psych. students will benefit. For examination candidates in other disciplines it is too specialized. It does not set out to be a work of reference. Well produced (except for a few upside down pages in my copy), it is possibly a little over priced at £40, especially as some of the contributions have appeared under various guises elsewhere. However as royalties are to go to research this sum should not deter any purchasers – research is surely the most likely way in which sufferers and their relatives, to whom the book is dedicated, can be rid of this scourge. A chapter contributed by them would have made for true completeness and reminded us all of what great suffering this disorder causes to young people. Despite hard financial times the research endeavour must not waiver.

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The Family Practice Desk Reference, 2nd Edition, edited by C.E. Driscoll, E.T. Bope, C.W. Smith, Jr and B.L. Carter. Pp. 700. Mosby Year Book, St Louis, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, London, Philadelphia, Sydney, Toronto, 1991. Paperback £27.50.

I found this a most difficult book to review – there is so little reading matter and so much that is devoted, as the author says, to 'tables, algorithms, figures, lists and other quick reference formats'.

It is crammed with details that are not necessary and that you do not want to know and yet lacks the broad sweep of the subject under review. Four pages are devoted to the 'CSF characteristics in the normal child and some neurologic disorders' whilst the treatment of psoriasis is given in four words 'tar, shampoo, intralesional steroids'.

The section on drug therapy is particularly well done; showing how the drug is supplied, the dosage, any adverse reaction and useful comments on interaction and contraindications.

The chapter on gynaecology containing some interesting and useful facts. The haematology–oncology section was beyond me, with sections on disseminated intravascular coagulopathy, paraneoplastic syndromes and common combination chemotherapy regimes – all dealt with in great detail.

I do realize that there are many differences between American and British general practice but I cannot see the

general practitioner in the United Kingdom referring to the numerous lists in the book – it would certainly be competing with the desk top computer! The book is unbalanced and I would find that it left more questions unanswered than answered.

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Books Received

Advances in Pineal Research, Volume 5, edited by Josephine Arendt and Paul Pevet. Pp 384, illustrated. John Libbey, Rome, Montrouge, 1991. Hardback £32.50.

Annual Review of Immunology, volume 9, edited by William E. Paul, C. Garrison Fathman and Henry Metzger. Pp. vii + 798, illustrated. Annual Reviews Inc., Palo Alto, California, 1991. Hardback \$41 (USA and Canada), \$46 (elsewhere).

Annual Review of Medicine: Selected Topics in the Clinical Sciences, Volume 42, edited by William P. Creher, Cecil H. Coggins and E. William Hancock. Pp. viii + 600. Annual Reviews Inc., Palo Alto, California, 1991. Hardback \$40 (USA and Canada), \$45 (elsewhere).

Annual Review of Public Health, Volume 12, edited by Gilbert S. Omenn, Jonathan E. Fielding and Lester B. Lave. Pp. vii + 585. Annual Reviews Inc., Palo Alto, California, 1991. Hardback \$45 (USA and Canada) \$50 (elsewhere).

Arrhythmia – A Guide to Clinical Electrocardiology, Erik Sandøe and Bjarne Sigurd. Pp. xv + 373, illustrated. Publishing Partners, Bingen, Germany, 1991. Hardback, \$105.

CRACK The Broken Promise, David F. Allen and James F. Jenkel. Pp. xi + 115. Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1991. Hardback £25.00, Paperback £9.95.

Critical Care, edited by Stephen Jenkinson. Pp. 230, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1991. Hardback, £22.50.

Developmental Reflexive Rehabilitation, David J McGlown. Pp. xi + 251. Taylor and Francis, London, 1990. Hardback £29.95.

Differential Diagnosis in AIDS – A Colour Guide, J.M. Parkin and B.S. Peters. Pp. 159, illustrated. Wolfe Medical Books, London, 1991. Paperback £10.

Emergency Plastic Surgery, edited by Richard J. Greco. Pp. 450, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1991. Spiralbound £40.

How They Do It – Procedures in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Pp. 1200. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1991. Hardback, £170.

Mechanical Ventilation and Assisted Respiration, edited by Ake Grenvik, John Downs, Jukka Rasanen and Robert Smith. Pp. 300, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1991. Hardback, £22.50.

The Medical Interview: The Three-Function Approach, Steven A. Cohen-Cole. Pp. xvii + 197. Mosby Year Book, St Louis, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, London, Sydney, Toronto, 1991. Paperback, £15.

NMR in Medicine and Biology. Structure Determination, Tomography in vivo Spectroscopy, K.H. Hausser and H.R. Kalbitzer. Pp xv + 217, illustrated. Springer Verlag, Berlin, 1991. Hardback DM 98.

Obesities, Jean Vague. Pp v + 153, illustrated. John Libbey, Rome, Montrouge, 1991. Paperback £17.50.

Progress in Obesity Research 1990, edited by Y. Oomura, S. Tarue, S. Inoue and T. Shimazu. Pp 704, illustrated. John Libbey, London, Paris, Rome, 1991. Hardback \$45.

Roundsmanship '91-'92. A Year Book Guide to Clinical Medicine, edited by Bruce B. Dan. Pp xv + 295, illustrated. Mosby-Year Book, St Louis, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, London, Philadelphia, Sydney, Toronto, 1991. Paperback £14.

Stress and Adaptation, Elemer Endroczi. Pp x + 180, illustrated. Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1991. Hardback £18.