

# Books/Boeke

## Ocular therapy

**Current Ocular Therapy.** Ed. by F. T. Fraunfelder, F. Hampton Roy and S. Martha Meyer. Pp. xiii + 792. Illustrated. £55. Northmead: WB Saunders. 1989.

This book describes ocular diseases with a brief summary and then gives the treatment. It notes the precautions to be taken in treatment, and a paragraph at the end comments on the prognosis.

At the end of each disease there is a list of references. There are 411 contributors, some experts in their field, and others unknown

but included because they have written an article on an obscure disease.

The disadvantage of the book is that the diseases are not listed in alphabetical order but under systems. You would not, for instance, know where to find listeriosis or tularaemia, if you were so inclined. These happen to be listed under infectious diseases, but if you had not known this, you would have been looking through incorrect chapters on parasitic disease, rickettsial or even viral infections.

Some diseases such as retinitis pigmentosa are very poorly described. And to describe the treatment with transplantation of

human placenta or strips of extra-ocular muscle to improve choroidal bloodflow, should not even be mentioned, rather than to say reliable evidence of success is not available. The editors should have been far more critical of many of the therapeutic suggestions made by the different authors. For instance, under treatment, it is stated that thermokeratoplasty is a different method employed to correct corneal asymmetry. The author should provide some critical comment rather than just make the statement.

With these exceptions, the book is suitable for all ophthalmologists.

## Dysfunctional uterine bleeding and menorrhagia

**Dysfunctional Uterine Bleeding and Menorrhagia.** Baillière's Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology: International Practice and Research, June 1989. Ed. by J. O. Drife. Pp. 217 + 428. Illustrated. £18,50. Northmead: WB Saunders. 1989.

This book in 13 chapters presents a comprehensive and detailed overview of the problems experienced by almost 20% of females who suffer from abnormal uterine bleeding.

The regular, controlled growth and differentiation of the endometrium is a remarkable phenomenon that has remained poorly understood, probably owing to the fact that endometrial function studies are still in their infancy.

The first five chapters describe the complicated but intriguing aspects that play a role in the menstruation under normal and abnormal physiological states. These chapters are well presented but highly scientific, and reading tends to be laborious. However, a more than adequate understanding is obtained, and one is left with the knowledge that this will be the field of further research in the future. The field has certainly been made exciting by the

gists. The common diseases are sufficiently well described, with current treatments. For registrars in training, the book provides quick summaries of each disease. This book is well recommended, although the therapy sections will have to be updated periodically. The authors would have accomplished more if they had omitted the rarer disorders and descriptions of surgical techniques.

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possible roles played by growth factors in the regulation of endometrial growth and their interaction with prostaglandins, as well as the potential markers of endometrial dysfunction, the secretory endometrial proteins.

The remaining eight chapters relate to the clinical problems encountered in patients with abnormal uterine bleeding. These chapters are well presented, highly informative and make pleasant reading, despite the detailed nature. The authors endeavour to highlight the factors that influence the patient's perception and tolerance of their menstrual disturbances, and emphasise how all these factors should play a role in determining the appropriate management. The final chapter is an outspoken but thought-provoking assessment of the role of the hysterectomy in the management of these patients.

This book is certainly useful in that it helps with the understanding of this notoriously difficult subject, and also assists in presenting an updated overview of the subject to the trainee gynaecologist and students.

F. Guidozi

## Comprehensive guide to cancer treatment

**Treatment of Cancer.** 2nd ed. Ed. by Karol Sikora and Keith E. Halnan. Pp. ix + 916. Illustrated. Price £99,50. London: Chapman and Hall Medical. 1990.

The last 2 decades have seen considerable changes in the field of clinical oncology and cancer research. New concepts including: the role of various oncogenes and growth factors in the genesis and promotion of tumour growth; the introduction of adjuvant systemic treatments and multimodal therapy approaches; the questioning of earlier dogmas regarding the extent of surgery required to 'cure' cancer; and the first glimmerings of rational 'biological therapies', have greatly increased the need for a comprehensive guide to cancer treatment. At the same time these rapid changes have made the authors' tasks so much more daunting. The second edition of *Treatment of Cancer* is thus to be welcomed. The book sets out to offer a comprehensive guide to the principles and practice of cancer treatment.

Different sections deal with general principles of molecular biology, specific treatment modalities including surgery, radiation therapy, hyperthermia, chemotherapy, endocrine therapy and biological approaches to treatment as well as considerations of diagnosis, staging and treatment monitoring. This introduction is followed by separate chapters dealing with common medical emergencies, anti-emetic treatment, the planning of clinical trials, the costs of treatment and continuing care.

All the sections are well written, informative, balanced and well

indexed. Having said that it would perhaps sound ungracious to criticise. I do feel, however, that the section on molecular biological aspects, especially regarding the important diagnostic aspects of molecular probes, could have been expanded upon.

In the section dealing with treatment of specific tumours by site I felt that the discussion of the use of tamoxifen for treatment of advanced breast cancer was oddly placed. Perusal of the topic headed 'Treatment of advanced breast cancer: endocrine therapy' leaves one with the impression that oestrogen blockers have no role to play. Only by paging back to the consideration of the use of adjuvant endocrine treatments does one find a discussion of the use of tamoxifen in advanced disease.

Furthermore, the review of adjuvant treatment of breast cancer could have made more use of the extensive meta-analyses that are helping to define the magnitude of adjuvant effects, and are thus helping to define the place of the various forms of adjuvant treatment. The author of this section could also, in the light of current results, have put the case for conservative treatment of breast cancer more positively.

Such criticisms are, however, small compared with the volume of work reviewed and the excellent quality of the book as a whole. This edition is bound to remain a standard work for a good number of years and is recommended as such.

N. Bezwoda

## Ocular syndromes

**Ocular Syndromes and Systemic Diseases.** 2nd edition. Ed. by F. Hampton Roy. Pp. xvii + 470. £40. Northmead: WB Saunders. 1989.

F. Hampton Roy has published this book on ocular syndromes which lists every conceivable syndrome that may be associated with ophthalmological disorders.

The syndromes are listed in alphabetical order and this makes an easy and quick reference guide. Each syndrome is described under the features of general, ocular and clinical, with one or two references. For those who delight in syndrome identification the book will have some appeal. For the majority of ophthalmologists

this book provides very limited information. Many syndromes included are esoteric, rare and of doubtful value. Double-whammy syndrome, Ganser's syndrome or nonsense syndrome, Kuru's syndrome (laughing death) and Papillon-Lefèvre syndrome, plus a host of others, are of mild interest. On the other hand, Doyme's honeycomb choroiditis, which is listed with Hutchinson-Tay's central guttate choroiditis and Malattia-Leventine's syndrome should be listed under autosomal-dominant drusen.

The book should be used as a reference guide in a medical school library to be used in a similar way to a dictionary.

N. H. Welsh

## Cardiac imaging

**Non-invasive Cardiac Imaging.** British Medical Bulletin. Vol. 45, No. 4. Ed. by D. G. Gibson. Pp. 830 + 1109. Illustrated. £25 (UK) or £31,50 (overseas). New York: Churchill Livingstone. 1989.

From the outset, this is an excellent publication referring to non-invasive cardiac imaging. It is one of a series published in the British Medical Bulletin on behalf of the British Council. The choice of the Scientific Editor, Dr D. G. Gibson, of the Brompton Hospital, is an extremely wise one in view of his scientific background as well as research interests in this field.

Each of the 14 chapters are edited by different single or multiple authors (never more than two) who are experts in their particular field. The chapters are all succinct and are followed by a fairly short but comprehensive list of current references directing

the enthusiastic reader to more information.

The entire spectrum of non-invasive investigation of the heart is covered. Thus, such techniques as echocardiography (M-mode and 2-D), nuclear imaging, magnetic resonance imaging, colour flow Doppler techniques and a most fascinating chapter on ultrafast CT-scanning are most admirably addressed. The entire book is richly illustrated with line drawings, black and white photographs and a collection of fascinating colour plates. Although the text is concentrated and filled with information, it still proves fairly easy reading and is certainly most stimulating.

In conclusion, this relatively short work is most highly recommended to anyone involved with the heart. I do believe that it warrants a wide readership and should be a most successful venture in a series of fine bulletins.

**J. Przybojewski**

## Laparoscopic surgery in obstetrics and gynaecology

**Laparoscopic Surgery.** Baillière's Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology: International Practice and Research, September 1989. Ed. by C. J. G. Sutton. Pp. 429 + 686. Illustrated. £18,50. Northmead: WB Saunders. 1989.

A number of pioneers in the field of operative laparoscopy have contributed to the compilation of this book. Every chapter is pertinent, a large component of each chapter being dedicated to methodology and performance of procedures. The excellent chapter by Kruit Semm and Iseult O'Neill-Freys with its many excellent illustrations on conventional operative laparoscopy sets one on the road to appreciating the expertise and intricacies involved in this highly specialised field of operative gynaecology, especially when laser is used.

The chapters on the carbon dioxide laser and fiberoptic laser laparoscopy do overlap, and a certain amount of repetition as well as biased opinion takes place, but boredom never sets in. At the end of these chapters one can appreciate why the American Fertility Society has recommended such a highly specialised in-depth training programme with ultimate hands-on experience before one can feel competent in this operative field fraught with possible complications and its ever safety-first precautions.

The authors set out to practice 'minimally invasive surgery',

with its resultant cost-containment, by getting results comparable with surgery performed at laparotomy, but avoiding its concomitant expense, increased risk, morbidity and discomfort to the patients. This will result in shorter hospital stays, operating times, and convalescence, less postoperative analgesia, and a reduction in the development of postoperative pelvic adhesions.

From this book it appears that laparoscopic surgery, with or without laser, is effective and safe in the performance of adhesiolysis, salpingotomy, salpingostomy, uterus sacral neurectomy, management of the polycystic ovary, endometriotic lesions and female sterilisation. The results of all the series in which laser therapy has been used are most impressive. However, most authors do still retain some reservation and they advocate further prospective trials before they can, without doubt, advocate this form of surgery.

The availability and expense of the laparoscopic laser equipment will be another major limiting factor. But the concluding chapter certainly impresses upon one that the expense and effort may all be worthwhile since it highlights the magnitude of procedures that can be performed by a surgeon gifted with excellent hand-eye coordination, manual dexterity and patience.

**F. Guidozi**

## Managing minor head injuries in casualty

**Management of Minor Head Injuries.** Ed. by I. J. Swann and D. W. Yates. Pp. x + 102. Illustrated. £14,95. Hampshire: Chapman & Hall Medical. 1989.

This short paperback is intended to be a bench book to junior doctors and advanced nursing personnel in casualty departments. It is succinct, clinical, richly illustrated and presents the policies of British accident and emergency (A and E) departments in a pragmatic way. The main thrust of the text is on how to manage, follow up and rehabilitate the majority of patients remaining after those requiring specialist neurosurgical attention have been defined and referred.

The six chapters are beautifully indexed for rapid access, and cover the presenting history and symptomatology, physical examination, judicious use of special investigations, management in the A and E department, ward management and outpatient follow-up and rehabilitation. The clear way in which anatomical variants confusing the interpretation of skull radiographs are detailed and the emphasis on problems arising during follow-up are the high-

lights of the text. Quite appropriately, the bibliography is limited to key publications.

A notable omission is that the sites for the placement of burr-holes are not detailed, although the operative technique is described adequately. One also has considerable reserve about statements that massive bleeding from the scalp is rare and usually stops spontaneously and that debridement of necrotic scalp should not be undertaken lightly. Equally, the use of titrated intravenous opiates for associated painful extracranial injuries and the use of intravenous diazepam to sedate anxious and unco-operative patients to facilitate investigations and treatment should be employed with the greatest circumspection and, preferably, only after specialist consultation.

Despite these provisos this book is excellent basic reading — particularly for those involved in the long-term care of such patients.

**J. W. van der Spuy**

## Child abuse

**ABC of Child Abuse.** Ed. by Roy Meadow. Pp. 59. Illustrated. London: BMJ. 1989.

The ABC series from the *British Medical Journal* continues with this excellent publication. The articles, all by experienced clinicians, explain all aspects of child abuse in a simple yet comprehensive manner.

The chapter on the examination of the child with alleged sexual abuse is of particular value and should be studied by all clinicians who care for children. The latter chapters are devoted to the

management of abuse in the British context — case conferences, legal aspects and medical reports. While not entirely applicable to the South African setting, these chapters do provide added insight to the management of abuse.

The book is not uncontroversial, but then this is a subject that lends itself to controversy. It is well illustrated, referenced and indexed and should become a standard teaching text.

**P. Lachman**

## Sex education for young people

**The Facts of Life.** Ed. by Marina Petropoulos. Pp. 1 + 222. Illustrated. R19,95 excl. GST. Cape Town: Tafelberg. 1990.

I must start this review by confessing to a prejudice against books dealing with sex and the 'facts of life'. However, before I am judged as a repressed neurotic with a mother fixation, I should emphasise that it is not the subject, but the way in which it is so often treated by authors that is the turn-off. All too frequently, books on the subject appear to have been written more for the gratification of the author than the elucidation of the readers. Either that, or they are so impossibly technical that they are unlikely to reach their target audience.

I therefore approached Marina Petropoulos' book with more than the average level of critical arousal — and was very pleasantly surprised. She has managed to inform without being judgemental, and is frank without being offensive. The language is easy, the

writing fluent, the message clear and the whole book pervaded with a healthy leavening of good, morally sound common sense.

As in most countries, the subject of sex education of children and adolescents is a vexed one in South Africa. Apart from the impossibly prudish, most people would agree that sex education is at least desirable if not essential in some form or another. Where the difficulty arises is who is going to give it?

Unfortunately, while this debate continues, generations of children have grown up with little or no sound advice on this most fundamental aspect of human behaviour. That is where a book like this one can be of great value. Parents may give it to their children secure in the knowledge that it will instruct without corrupting. Marina Petropoulos has done a good job, and her book deserves a wide market.

N. C. Lee

## The importance of clinical observations in cardiology

**Physical Examination of the Heart and Circulation.** 2nd ed. Ed. by Joseph K. Perloff. Pp. viii + 292. Illustrated. £17,95. Northmead: WB Saunders. 1989.

In some parts of the world, bedside cardiological examination is neglected and instead expensive non-invasive tests relied upon to make a diagnosis. This book, written by a master of physical examination serves to re-emphasise just how important clinical observations can be in cardiology.

All aspects of the examination are well covered, including a chapter on the association of cardiac defects with abnormal physical appearances. The text is liberally sprinkled with quotes from clinicians of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and it is salutary to note the remarkable diagnostic ability of such people.

The descriptions of venous pressure and the technique of palpation are particularly good, although perhaps a little more

emphasis on how difficult observation of venous pressure abnormalities are for the average clinician would have been appropriate.

The chapter on auscultation is particularly recommended. Perloff's classification of murmurs plus explanations for the mechanism of their production is very clear. He also draws attention to the variation of lung capacitance as being responsible for the inspiratory splitting of the pulmonary second sound ('hang out' effect) rather than being due to an increase in venous return.

The book is extremely readable, although occasionally giving one the impression of a trip down memory lane, and can be recommended to everyone interested in bedside cardiological diagnosis. For the average undergraduate medical student, however, it probably contains too much detail to absorb easily, especially at a cost of nearly R80.

J. E. Stevens

## Growth regulation of thyroid gland and thyroid tumours

**Growth Regulation of Thyroid Gland and Thyroid Tumours: Frontiers of Hormone Research.** Vol. 18. Ed. by P. E. Goretzki, and H. D. Röher. Pp. viii + 163. Illustrated. £68,80. Basel: S. Karger. 1989.

The regulation of thyroid cell growth has been extensively studied for many years. A workshop on growth regulation of thyroid gland and thyroid tumours was held recently to discuss advances in this field of research and analyse different investigative *in vivo* and *in vitro* models employed in the study of the regulation of thyroid cell growth. This book (the proceedings of the workshop) illustrates the progress made in our understanding of the regulation of thyroid cell growth, and introduces the reader to the methodological limitations of present research.

The chapters cover presentations from recognised researchers and include topics such as: receptors and receptor-transducing systems in normal and neoplastic human thyroid tissue; epidermal growth factor receptors and receptor localisation in thyroid folli-

cular cells; and the effects of thyrotropin, cyclic AMP, epidermal growth factor, and insulin-like growth factor-I on growth regulation of human thyrocytes. The development of a differentiated human thyroid cell line, and use of the athymic nude mice to investigate *in vivo* growth regulation of thyroid tissue are discussed in detail.

The concluding chapter highlights the limitations of research techniques presently employed and summarises current understanding of our knowledge of the regulation of normal and abnormal thyroid cell growth.

This book provides a reasonably up-to-date account of a complex subject. It does not provide (nor is it intended to) the reader with new insights into the management of patients with thyroid cancer, and thus would be recommended primarily for cell biologists and those with a special interest in this field of medicine.

M. J. Abrahamson

## Diagnosis in neurology

**Topical Diagnosis in Neurology: Anatomy, Physiology, Signs, Symptoms.** 2nd revised ed. Ed. by P. Duus. Pp. x + 337. Illustrated. DM 370. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1989.

This book is an English translation of an apparently popular German textbook. Its preface states that it is intended for 'students, interns and residents' and its title indicates that it deals with 'anatomy, physiology, signs and symptoms'. Unfortunately it attempts to do too much in 337 pages.

Neuro-anatomy is clearly described and illustrated, but ranges in complexity from definitions of synapse and axon to detailed anatomy of the limbic system and visual cortex of limited clinical relevance. The book's clinical component is similarly unbalanced. A detailed case report of thalamic toxoplasmosis takes up almost an entire page, while all muscle disease is allocated similar space. Too-literal translations of European continental terminology make

for strange reading, which can only be confusing to students. The first of a list of 8 myopathies is 'dystrophia musculorum progressiva', cluster headaches are called 'erythroprosopalgia' and the word 'rigor' is used to indicate the rigidity of Parkinson's disease.

Inaccuracies are present, such as 'hyper- and hypoclaemic' types of 'paroxysmal paralysis' instead of 'hyper- and hypokalaemic'. All myoclonic movements are ascribed to damage in the area of the Guillain-Mollaret triangle and Queckenstedt's test is said to be 'usually sufficient for determining whether there is a partial or total blockage of the spinal CSF'. Ulnar neuropathies may occur 'if the nerve jumps out of its sulcus (luxation)'. Other introductory neuro-anatomy and neurology books more appropriate for South Africans are available, and thus I cannot recommend this book to those commencing a study of the subject.

Michael H. Silber