book. The lasting impression, however, is of how little we know at present about the factors controlling, modifying, or altering brain development in utero. The majority of the work reviewed is at a research stage and its clinical relevance is unclear or uncertain.

The 13 chapters are divided up into three sections—antepartum fetal assessment, intrapartum fetal assessment, and major specific fetal conditions. Because much of the presentations are controversial and the author(s) may have a biased viewpoint the practice of editorial commentary on each chapter is valuable and puts the subject into perspective, though they could have been more critical.

The major criticism is the excessive concentration on fetal hypoxia. Six chapters were concerned with this subject in one aspect or another (and contained information that has been regularly reviewed in other books and journals) and yet only one chapter dealt with fetal behaviour.

Another clear message from the book is that fetal neurobehavioural development will only be properly understood when the observations of various fetal neurological parameters are related to developmental outcome in infancy and childhood.

It may well be that the second edition of the book will be of more widespread clinical relevance and interest.

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been a problem. That will speed up. The difficult part will be programming the interpretation which depends on evidence for effective treatment of particular abnormalities of motion, electromyography, and force.

Some clinicians may find that the book offers more than they want to know about gait. There are 87 figures, 13 tables, and five pages of recording charts. One figure includes 24 graphs. In the middle of the book there are 80 pages of continuous figures. The complexity of the data is illustrated by the six pages explaining their mathematical treatment. The formulae underlying their 'bootstrap' technique are beyond the comprehension of a reviewer more familiar with shoestrapping methods.

Their anthropometric data are easily assimilated and helpful. The gait analysis system used four motion picture cameras, a force plate, and electromyography linked to a minicomputer. As a scientific study this monograph is a landmark. Departments of bioengineering, gait laboratories, physiotherapy teaching schools, and academic departments of orthopaedic surgery and paediatric neurology will find it a classic source of reference. If the next 10 years bring the data justifying its cost effectiveness, this approach will have been vindicated.

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summary covers definitions, age of onset, presenting symptoms, clinical signs, and associated features. The usual course and prognosis is described. Investigations, biopsy findings, genetics, and principles of management are outlined. These summaries provide a quick *aide memoire*, which will be useful for those studying for postgraduate examinations and those involved in teaching.

The case histories themselves are succinct and useful in that many describe the 'not-so-typical' presentations common in everyday practice, the multitude of children depicted in the super clinical photographs reflecting the wealth of experience of the author. There are good illustrations of surgical appliances—braces, calipers, etc—which would be helpful for parents to see—all the children are smiling! The well reproduced biopsy pictures are well integrated into the text and therefore much more digestible than a separate section just on biopsy appearances.

The section on investigations only describes needle muscle biopsy. The section on ultrasound is limited to only a short description. I would have preferred more detail with more photographs of ultrasound appearances of common disorders as this is an area unfamiliar to many paediatricians. The bibliography consists of only 10 references; a more comprehensive one would have been helpful.

The Atlas will appeal to general paediatricians as well as those with an interest in neurology and also to community paediatricians with responsibility for disabled children. It will also be of interest to other disciplines working with such children.

When this book arrived I immediately found myself searching through it for a description of the condition the name of which I had just seen that day for the first time on the biopsy result of a little patient of mine—I was not to be disappointed!

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The Development of Mature Walking. By D Sutherland, R Olshen, E Biden, and M Wyatt. Pp 227: £24 hardback. Blackwell Scientific Publications/MacKeith Press, 1989. ISBN 0-632-01902-6.

Sophisticated study of the gait of 309 normal children in 10 age groups from 1-7 years makes a formidable story. Altogether 449 recordings were made on the volunteered subjects, over 90% of whom were white. The data and graphics presented may well become the basis for a future 'expert' system for gait analysis in children. This would be a 'black box' capable of collecting, processing, and interpreting the data on which clinical decisions can be made. Though the San Diego laboratory is among the most advanced in the world, their computer has had to deal with so much data that the turnaround time has

A Colour Atlas of Muscle Disorders in Childhood. By V Dubowitz. Pp 182: £40 hardback. Wolfe Medical, 1988. ISBN 0-7234-0811-4.

This is not so much a textbook more a glossary of cases from Victor Dubowitz's wide clinical experience. However, I suspect that there are many other paediatricians who like myself find the good presentation of a clinical case, demonstrating the features of a particular condition, a far more meaningful way to learn than a dry description of the condition itself.

The book, well titled as an atlas, covers all the major muscle disorders of childhood, the common and the uncommon, in its 182 pages, 80% of which are pictures. The layout is excellent. Each section starts with a short summary of the disease in note form in blue, easy to locate, tables. The

Pregnancy and Risk. By D James and G Stirrat. Pp 209: £18 paperback. Wiley, 1988. ISBN 0 471 91188 7.

Media and public obsession with the minutiae of medical wizardry, coupled with the occasional or frequent medical success