correct all false beliefs or simply to help the person to 'think positively'.

The second section of the book is fascinating due partly to the range of disorders addressed but particularly due to the vivid descriptions of the different psychotherapeutic techniques used. Among others, there are outlines of a cognitive behavioural approach for chronic pain, a family therapy approach for anorexia nervosa and a psychoanalytic approach to the treatment of brittle diabetes in children and adolescents. One of the interesting findings of this last approach, described by Peter Fonagy and George Moran, was that presence of themes of conflict in the analytic material foreshadowed improvement in diabetic control, which in turn appeared to increase psychological symptomatology some weeks later. The efficacy of the approaches used is – for the most part – shown in tables and graphs that clearly describe research findings.

In contemplating this book, there is one area of significant concern for clinicians treating children. A considerable part of the text refers to the treatment of adult patients. However, these issues are largely of relevance to a younger age group and assist in the overall understanding of psychological treatment of psychosomatic and physical disorders. Overall, this is an informative and useful book. It is also readable and much enlivened by numerous clinical vignettes.

One of the authors rightly comments on the importance of liaison between physicians and psychiatrists. This book reinforces that view and by being accessible to both physicians and psychiatrists, should be of assistance in achieving the goal.

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Children, Politics and Medicare: Experiences in a Canadian Province. By G C Robinson and G R F Elliot. (Pp 340; price not stated, paperback.) University of Calgary Press, 1993. ISBN 1-895176-31-X.

On first seeing the title of this book, my interest was aroused as there are few books dealing with the important relationship between children, their health, politics, and the health care delivery system. I had hoped to find experience of advocacy on behalf of children and perhaps some useful insights into how children's health can be made a 'political' issue; in other words, how to influence politicians.

Having read the book, I was disappointed. Though the authors recognise the importance of political decisions to child health and that health must be socially created by a 'healthy community', the book remains a rather heavy description of the development of population based services for children in British Columbia. The development and present state of each individual service for children from services for children with cancer and children with cerebral palsy to the British Columbia ambulance service are painstakingly described. Interesting insights and parallels with the development of children's services in the UK can be found in each chapter including a link with the BPA through Dr Donald Paterson, a BPA founder member and former Secretary and President who developed a handicapped children's register in British Columbia. However, the authors' analysis is concerned mainly with the role of key individuals in the medical profession touching only occasionally on the role of

Politics with a big 'P' and how best to influence political decision making as it affects children.

Despite failing to live up to my perhaps unreasonable expectations, the book does seek to establish some important principles. Firstly, population based programmes and services are essential if the medical needs of all children are to be met; secondly, personal medical services are inadequate for meeting these needs; thirdly, population based and personal services need to be integrated as part of a plan for child health at regional and national level. In a country such as Canada, sitting as it does in such close proximity to the USA where these principles have yet to be accepted, their reiteration is vital in resisting the political temptation to financially starve population based services. In the NHS's new 'internal market', these principles will need to be defended and developed.

The authors have provided a worthy defence of population based services from the experience of one Canadian province but their book makes little original contribution to the debate as to how political decision making can be influenced in order to protect and promote the health of children.

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Examination Paediatrics. By W Harris, R Choong, and B Timms. (Pp 351; price not stated, paperback.) MacLennan and Petty Pty Ltd, 1992. ISBN 0-86433-064-2.

This book is aimed to help candidates for the FRACP Part 1 Examination in Paediatrics and it is also relevant for the MRCP (UK) Part 2 Examination (paediatric option). Details given about the examination are all relevant to the Australian examination but the general approach and the advice on the preparation would be very valuable for candidates in MRCP UK. The main body of the book comprises short and long cases relevant to the various anatomical systems, with instructional material structured to support long and short case examination. The information in this section is clear and detailed. This would be extremely valuable for all those preparing for these postgraduate examinations. There is a liberal use of tables and structured notes as well as diagrams, although some of these diagrams contribute little other than confusion and a challenge to recognise the relevance of some of the drawings of the standardised sick child. However, this may be a stimulus to learning in its own right.

The very strong point of this book is the care taken to prepare the candidate psychologically for the examination. This section is very entertainingly written and leads to compulsive reading. The reader is given advice on how to build up confidence by using a series of useful psychological devices. Advice on personal presentation is also provided even down to the potentially politically incorrect suggestion that female candidates should avoid sexy clothing. This section is sprinkled with amusing quotations from diverse sources from the extremes of Star Wars through to Nietzsche. There are details given of how to prepare for the examination and even how to visualise failure as a temporary setback, unless accepted as a definite indication that a change of training is indicated. This realistic approach is helpful but the projection of the examiner as the 'enemy' may not be as psychologically beneficial as it is entertaining.

Perhaps it would be more constructive for

the authors to describe the examiner as a person who is keenly anticipating an excellent performance by these fruits of the training scheme in the same way as an opera lover sits with bated breath throughout the overture. It is a shame that the authors do not give the candidates advice on the mental picture of the examiner concentrating on providing a fair examination in the hope of their success, but being aware that they stand as guardians not only of the health of children, but also of the candidates themselves who might fortuitously pass the examination, but find him/herself in a position of responsibility for which they are not adequately prepared. Every examiner knows that giving a fail mark is desperately disappointing for the candidate, but they also know that the same candidate's life can be more damaged if that candidate goes on to make a fatal error in the management of a sick child.

It would also have been helpful for the candidate to have more direct advice on how best to study, especially in the use of active memory recall and perhaps the organisation of self help groups for long and short case practice. Overall, this is an excellent book with pages of valuable information and a useful reading list. This book is surely a must for paediatric trainees in Australia and would be of great help to all those preparing for MRCP (UK).

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Accidents and Emergencies in Childhood. Edited by Jo Sibert. (Pp 134; £14.95 paperback.) Royal College of Physicians of London, 1992. ISBN 1-873240-50-3.

Although new technological principles have been used in many ways to create a safer living environment and have resulted in some spectacular medical advances, they have also been responsible for the development of new problems with which we have to struggle. This publication, based on a paediatric conference at the Royal College of Physicians, reviews the current situation with regard to accidents, accident prevention, and emergency medicine and clearly defines the areas where further work is needed. It also pays attention to child protection issues particularly accidental/non-accidental injury and the causes of burns and scalds. It would be wrong to imply that a great deal of attention has not already been paid to safety issues at home and in the workplace. The conclusion in the text that there is not much evidence that Britain is approaching the problems with the seriousness and resolve it requires is worrying. It perhaps points to the end for a cultural change in our attitudes and the political will to meet the challenge. If, as the text reports, changing the environment is often easier than changing behaviour then new innovative ideas are required in the educational field. The call for accident and emergency departments to rise to the challenge together with their paediatric colleagues gives a clear message which needs urgent action. The text would not have been complete without a commentary on the social issues of disadvantage and neglect and their impact on child development and safety. This I was glad to find laid out in the penultimate chapter. This book is an excellent review and can be recommended to all those involved in emergency work, accident prevention, and the wider aspects of child health.

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