Most of the chapters on the section for the bladder describe specialist works including: reconstruction, diversion, augmentation, and substitution – procedures that should not be attempted by surgeons with occasional practice.

There are good descriptions on various techniques of orchidopexy with recognition of the use of laparoscopy for impalpable testes and orchidectomy.

The last section is on the penis and urethra and contains detailed descriptions for common procedures including circumcision, treatment of concealed and webbed penis, and the most popular methods of hypospadias repair. While the surgical techniques are described in detail I regret that there is scant discussion on the indications for a common procedure such as circumcision. There is plenty of evidence in this country that many unnecessary circumcisions are being performed. It is still not adequately recognised that failure to retract the foreskin in the first four years of life is not abnormal and that medical indication for circumcision in this age group is rare.

At £135 this textbook does not come cheap but overall it is an excellent book and will serve as an invaluable reference for any surgeon involved with the care of urological problems in children.

PAUL TAM

Clinical reader in paediatric surgery

Community Paediatrics. 2nd Ed. Edited by Leon Polnay and David Hull. (Pp 479; £35 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone, 1993. ISBN 0-443-04250-0.

All paediatricians need to keep up to date with community child health and some still need to discover its fascination. This is a field where thinking is developing rapidly and services are changing, but a historical perspective remains crucial. *Community Paediatrics* is currently the best basic text on the bookshelf covering the essential elements that all paediatricians in training need to know about. It offers an easy read to those broadly familiar with the contents already.

The format of the new revised edition provides a brief historical background followed by an account of the current provision of health, education, and social services. The section on benefits will date, but is still useful. The one on the law could be expanded to include a European perspective as we move ever closer.

The information section, supplemented by the later chapters and appendix, is useful, but more on information technology in child health could have been included. Examples of audits undertaken would stimulate interest and pointers to areas where further research is indicated would be a major asset.

The basics of growth, physical and emotional development are well covered. Perhaps accidents do not receive the depth of coverage they deserve considering their importance in child health, particularly after infancy, but the multidisciplinary and inter-agency aspects are clearly illustrated.

The section on child protection precedes the chapters on disability, which are excellent. Throughout the book key data, summaries, tables, and facts are highlighted in green. This attractive layout breaks up the text in a useful way.

There is a very good introduction to emotional and behavioural problems while

the section on genetics is essential but short. References are more than adequate for a basic text and generally up to date.

At present there is discussion about the syllabus for paediatricians in training. There is a need for clearer definition of the knowledge and skills needed at both basic and higher training levels. The examinations in paediatrics have included an increasing number of community topics, so the comprehensive revision undertaken to produce this second edition is both timely and very worthwhile. I strongly recommend it to paediatricians at all levels.

SHEILA SHRIBMAN

Consultant paediatrician and director of child health

Essential Paediatrics. 3rd Ed. Edited by David Hull and Derek I Johnston. (Pp 365; £21.51 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone, 1993. ISBN 0-443-04782-0.

The authors of the third edition of *Essential Paediatrics* claim that it is just that – 'The essential core of knowledge required by medical students during their clinical course'. As a whole this is exactly what it manages to achieve.

Written by Sir David Hull and Derek Johnston, in conjunction with 13 experts associated with Nottingham University who contribute on aspects of the many paediatric subspecialties, this textbook is both sufficiently comprehensive for finals, yet free from excessive detail. At first glance it is well laid out with important points clearly highlighted, either in diagrammatic form or in tables. The numerous illustrations are easy to memorise, constitute effective summaries, and provide welcome breaks in blocks of text, as does the use of colour type.

This latest edition is far more user friendly than its predecessors; boasting colour photographs, the authors have obviously woken up to the effectiveness of visual aids in keeping medical students awake. Similarly, colour is utilised throughout in drawing the reader's attention to salient sections of text. Many of the radiographs are accompanied by diagrammatic representations which aid interpretation, a necessity for most medical students.

The 21 chapters cover the main systems of the body as well as more specific topics such as growth, mental handicap, and behaviour. In particular there is a useful introductory chapter on 'the ill child and his doctor' explaining how to take a history, though more importantly how to cope with the awe inspiring task of examining a strange child for the first time, and deal with anxious parents too.

There is some material superfluous to an undergraduate medical course, especially the 'genes' chapter, which goes into far more detail than the average medical student needs or understands. In contrast, the chapter on emotions and behaviour, tucked away at the back, skims over some topics too briefly. A subject like sexual abuse and its consequences for children and adults is covered in eight lines, and although the bibliographies at the end of each chapter offer useful pointers for more detailed reading there isn't one on child protection.

An appendix contains an easy to find list of all the normal values that an undergraduate would ever need as well as an effective outline of the child health surveillance programme, a summary of the UK immunisation schedule, and a paediatric formulary.

From medical students' point of view, it updates an established and popular book that is already viewed as one of the best student paediatric texts on the market. Its readability is a strength, and with such tightly packed student schedules, it provides easily absorbed, succinct material yet manages to engender an enthusiasm for paediatrics.

KATIE BROCKLESBY
Medical student

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches. 3rd Ed. Edited by Michael Rutter, Eric Taylor, and Lionel Hersov. (Pp 1122; £69.50 hardback.) Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1994. ISBN 0-632-02822-X.

The publication of the first edition of *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches* in 1976 was a major landmark in the child psychiatry literature. Those were exciting times for specialists working in the field of child psychiatry. The time was indeed ripe for a new and different textbook of child psychiatry aimed at providing a comprehensive account of the current state of knowledge through the integration of research findings and the understanding that comes from clinical practice. The book became a bible for child psychiatrists in this country and internationally.

The just published third edition has been duly responsive to the considerable professional changes of the last two decades, and the increase in scientific work relevant to the practice of child and adolescent psychiatry. The book has been completely rewritten and new and fresh approaches to the subject reflected in the new chapters. They acknowledge the decreasing importance of theoretical approaches, psychodynamic and otherwise, and the increased influence of developmental psychopathology. A richer appreciation of the role of biological factors in the origin of psychological disorders becomes apparent and the relationship between child and adult disorders is similarly given considerable attention. The involvement of mental health professions in the consequences of child abuse had led to a chapter on this topic and there are also chapters on psychiatric involvement with infants, and the AIDS pandemic. The coverage of treatment issues has been increased: and the evidence from trials as a basis for therapists' actions is carefully reviewed.

For paediatricians who still think of child psychiatry as a purely clinical endeavour strongly influenced by psychological theories, the depth and range of the discussion on underlying scientific issues may be a revelation. Advances in the classification of psychiatric disorders provide interesting reflections on the nature of classification in medicine generally. Of particular interest to paediatricians should be the chapters on interviewing parents, children and families, on clinical neurophysiology, on genetic chromosomal and brain influences on childhood psychopathology. The effects of chronic adversities, of physical and emotional maltreatment, and of family breakdown are also relevant to the work of paediatricians, particularly community paediatricians.

Recently there has been an upsurge of interest in disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, neuropsychiatric problems such as obsessive compulsive disorders and tics. These are fully described

and the latter will be of particular interest to paediatric neurologists. There are, of course, comprehensive chapters on psychiatric aspects of somatic disease and on psychological aspects of chronic physical illness, a new chapter on psychological reactions to life threatening and terminal illnesses and bereavement.

Overall the book remains a major achievement. It is rigorously and carefully edited. It is a must for every paediatric unit. Practising paediatricians will find it an essential source in gaining in-depth knowledge on the psychiatric perspective of many of the psychopathological aspects of paediatric practice.

M E GARRALDA

Professor of child and adolescent psychiatry

MCQs for the MRCP: Part 1 Paediatrics. By N Barakat and M O'Callaghan. (Pp 172; £12.95 paperback.) Butterworth Heinemann, 1994. ISBN 0-7506-2029-3. **100 Paediatric Picture Tests.** By A Winrow, M Gatzoulis, and G Supramanian. (Pp 202; £16.95 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone, 1994. ISBN 0-443-04942-4. **Key Topics in Paediatrics.** By A Davies and A Billson. (Pp 335; £22 paperback.) Bio Scientific Publishers, 1994. ISBN 1-872748-58-9. **Paediatric Cases for Postgraduate Examinations.** By S Attard-Montalto and V Saha. (Pp 160; £13.95 paperback.) Butterworth Heinemann, 1994. ISBN 0-7506-2096-X.

There is a shortage of books available which aim to come to the aid of the hard pressed young paediatrician preparing for the MRCP (Paediatrics) examination. Here are four candidates to help fill that gap. How far do they succeed?

MCQs for the MRCP: Part 1 Paediatrics enters the lists promptly after the introduction of a specifically paediatric part 1. It is set out in the familiar and convenient format of most MCQ books with questions on the front and answers on the back of each page. After some preliminary hints on how to approach the examination, the questions cover a wide range from embryology through all major clinical subjects, including child psychiatry and community paediatrics, to poisoning. The questions seem of at least comparable difficulty to those in the part 1. Indeed, my current consultant found them *very* difficult, but of course you cannot really teach an endocrinologist who is not sure whether half the children with Wolfram syndrome develop their diabetes insipidus in the second decade (apparently they do not)! The list of 'recommended texts and references' simply names the standard textbooks; most recent examinees can specify much shorter works they have found a real help in focusing the mind in examination mode. Although designed for part 1 candidates this compilation of questions will also be useful to DCH and MRCP part 2 candidates.

Books of picture tests obviously cannot encompass all the conditions that might turn up in the examination but *100 Paediatric Picture Tests* covers a lot of ground and highlights common problems. The questions accompanying the pictures aim to mimic those asked at the MRCP part 2 examination and so allow the reader to practise the technique of answering concisely and to the point. The lack of a mock marking scheme somewhat decreases the value of this book for the examinee. The short notes on the answers are useful. The high quality of the photographs

greatly enhances the pleasure of reading this book. I found it very useful and will await these authors' next 100 cases.

Paediatrics is such a wide specialty that at every stage of training (and presumably thereafter) concise and up to date summaries of common topics are welcome. They are also a great help in passing exams. *Key Topics in Paediatrics* fulfils this brief admirably. It contains well written, short accounts (none extending beyond four pages in seminate form) of 100 topics spanning the alphabet from 'abdominal pain' to 'vomiting'. In general the authors key in to the important points well. I have found the discussions useful for teaching sessions and group examination practice. Obviously these brief accounts do not contain the fine detail that is available in many full textbooks but the important sociobehavioural and psychological aspects of paediatric care are not ignored and I found these summaries well balanced.

Most candidates preparing for the MRCP part 2 written examination are especially anxious about the 'grey cases' and practice is not easy to obtain. *Paediatric Cases for Postgraduate Examinations* is in this format and can be used effectively for such practice. The cases are well chosen but the lack of illustrations and photographs does limit its value. The mock marking schemes and discussions on the questions are helpful and the reference lists are useful.

In their different ways all four of these books can make a contribution to the arduous task of preparing for the membership examination in paediatrics. I can recommend them.

SARAH EL NEIL

Paediatric registrar

Atlas of Paediatric Dermatology. By Bernard Cohen. (Pp 221; £60 hardback.) Mosby, 1994. ISBN 1-56375-019-8.

A colour atlas comprising the slide collection of an eminent paediatric dermatologist in a single volume is not new. For a decade one of my favourite textbooks has been Verbov and Morley's so called colour atlas. My copy, acquired as a freebie, has had an honoured place on the shelf ever since. To be honest, for a time it was relegated to sit between the *Pan Book of Mushrooms* and the Modigliani picture book in the living room because that was the only shelf tall enough to accommodate it. But I always knew where to find it when a new rash struck.

One advantage of Dr Cohen's atlas is that it is 2 cm shorter (though still well over the 97th centile for a medical text) but then this is not merely a collection of maps. It is an atlas as suitably Atlantic in its proportions as it is transatlantic in its perspective. The scope is reassuringly global and contains some fine clear illustrations of the strata for those wishing to revise their human geology and helpful algorithms to guide the route planner. The problem is the text which occupies at least half the space on most pages and tends to compete with the excellent illustrations by squeezing them into the lower half of the pages. Thus, reproduced half size, they vividly rekindle memories of squinting across a darkened theatre at the distant slides in the old membership exam. Having said that the photographs are frighteningly good it just seems a shame that cost, space, and text have to compete at their expense.

The cover is not original – a photograph of a close up of a skin lesion just below the right

eye for some reason evokes a mixture of curiosity and sympathy for the afflicted child that urges the reader to delve further. Now where have I seen that before? Ah yes, between the mushrooms and the Modigliani.

Skin diseases in children are a problem for me. As a victim of a skin disease I reckon to have some consumer insight that others might lack. I feel that the emotional impact of disfiguring and stigmatising disorders needs to be dealt with directly. However, this book, with a rather dry text, doesn't achieve this at all.

One of my sons, the atopic one, caught me browsing and seeing a picture of a particularly diseased finger said 'Look that finger's got the same eczema as mine'. This left me wondering first whether he was right, second whether it was what MY finger had got, and thirdly whether that little boy's finger I saw last week.... Have I discovered epidemic sporotrichosis? What colour will I be after 3 months of 'treatment with an oral saturated solution of potassium iodide?' Finally I reminded myself that, if misused, this atlas may be both an obscene publication and a danger to the public. In that context, it is unfortunate that the child protection section is squeezed into the end of the book, there is no section dealing with the skin in dysmorphic syndromes, and the picture of phimosis is in fact paraphimosis. Now where has the Modigliani gone?

RON SMITH

Consultant paediatrician

Sudden Death in Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence. By R Byard and S Cohle. (Pp 545; £60 hardback.) Cambridge University Press, 1994. ISBN 0-521-42031-8.

The sudden death of a child, especially when unexpected, is a devastating event and the least parents anticipate is an explanation for their loss. The necropsy is likely to be the single most important investigation.

It *should* be self evident that the pathologist will need to place the available history in a paediatric context and approach a case with a set of questions and possible diagnoses relevant to the paediatric age group. This will influence the ancillary investigations performed or initiated at the necropsy, and required for final diagnosis; there may be no second chance. Importantly, the question of non-accidental injury must also be borne in mind and usually lies close to the surface when investigating death in this age group.

Sudden Death in Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence addresses these problems very directly and, although the foreword suggests it might be of interest to clinicians, it is primarily for pathologists. The authors, a consultant histopathologist at Adelaide Children's Hospital and a forensic pathologist at the Blodgett Memorial Medical Center Michigan, perceived a deficit in the literature and this book does not have a direct competitor. Ten chapters are devoted to a system by system review of 'natural' causes, including a lengthy chapter on sudden infant death syndrome, recent enough to debate the effect of sleeping position. Two chapters are 'forensic' and deal with accidental and non-accidental causes. Six brief appendices provide autopsy protocols for various case subtypes.

Chapter sections are well set out with clear, focused text. The referencing is up to date with the relatively high proportion of citations to individual case reports emphasising the