Book reviews

The Malformed Fetus and Stillbirth—a Diagnostic Approach. By RM Winter, SAS Knowles, FR Bieber, M Baraitser. Pp 317: £75 hardback. John Wiley, 1988. ISBN 0-4719-0946-7.

A cynical British paediatrician, should such a person exist, would be excused for thinking that a book written for perinatal pathologists would have a pitifully limited market in the United Kingdom. This book will have relevance to a much wider range of clinicians than its title might imply, however, and will also be useful to geneticists, radiologists, and even obstetricians. Paediatricians will certainly welcome this complement to Smith's *Recognisable Malformations*, as they become increasingly involved in counselling parents of the malformed fetus diagnosed in utero by ultrasound. It also happens to be one of those books that is physically pleasurable to handle and to read, although unfortunately its subject matter makes it unsuitable for the coffee table.

The first section deals with the definitions and statistics concerning pregnancy loss and perinatal death. The second section is a practical guide to the pathologist on the examination of the fetus and the placenta. Section 3 forms the bulk of the text and illustrations. A chapter on chromosomal abnormalities is followed by a sequence of chapters dealing with specific organ systems or anatomical regions. This section also contains chapters dealing specifically with the diagnosis of hydropic fetuses, and the problems associated with twin pregnancies and intrauterine infections. There are exhaustive lists based on physical findings, listing the possible associated syndromes. Section 4 describes these various syndromes, arranged in alphabetical order, and reviewed succinctly with key references. Tables and graphs of normal fetal measurements and organ weights at different gestations complete the text, and the index is clear and seems comprehensive.

The chapters dealing with individual organ systems are very liberally illustrated with well reproduced black and white pathological photographs and radiographs. Indeed the illustrations are so dense in some places that the text becomes separated from the relevant tables and illustrations.

From a paediatrician's point of view there is a merciful lack of photomicrographs. The section on chromosomal disorders is a little thin compared with very comprehensive chapters on, for instance, lethal bone dysplasias and craniofacial abnormalities. Chromosomal disorders are also omitted from section four, which describes the major features of over 300 multiple anomaly syndromes. The descriptions are necessarily brief, and one or two key references are given, of which approximately half refer to standard paediatric and half to genetic journals.

The use of this book may involve a little more page turning than is necessary using a text with a 'page-a-syndrome' format, but the benefit of clearly written overviews of the organ systems and their defects outweighs this slight disadvantage. The wide selection of recent and technically excellent clinical photographs, the comprehensive diagnostic lists, and the thorough referencing make it an extremely useful text for neonatologists, pathologists, geneticists, and ultrasonographers. Unfortunately for those running department libraries, and fortunately for the publishers, it is a book which induces an unhealthy degree of possessiveness in the reader.

P HOPE

CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN
John Radcliffe Hospital,
Oxford

Pediatric Intensive Care. By Jeffrey P Morray. Pp 581: £64.15 hardback. Prentice-Hall, 1987. ISBN 0-8385-7800-4.

Paediatric intensive care incorporates all life threatening or potentially life threatening childhood illness. The subject is vast and difficult to encompass in one book. Jeffrey Morray and 46 coauthors, mostly from Seattle, have attempted to cover the subject in under 600 pages. The book is organised along the lines of a daily ward round with each system covered in turn. There are 13 system headings further divided into 50 different topics.

In order to cover such a large amount of ground each subject is covered briefly and at first glance very superficially. For in-

stance, congenital heart disease is summarised in seven pages. However, many short sections do contain a remarkable amount of information. Subjects covered include all the main system disorders, psychological and ethical issues, pharmacology, transport, and a useful section on the intensive care management of child abuse. There are a large number of tables, mostly copied from previous publications, and after each short section is a comprehensive reference list.

Several important topics are missed out or covered inadequately. The section on infection is very brief with only 150 words on meningitis, and near miss cot death, toxic shock syndrome, haemorrhagic shock encephalopathy syndrome, and bronchopulmonary dysplasia are not covered at all.

There are obvious problems in translating the American approach to the British system, confusion over drug names and laboratory units is a minor irritation. Overall this is a practical reference book for the intensive care unit but of limited use for the general paediatrician.

D P HEFF

SENIOR LECTURER IN CHILD HEALTH
Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital,
Alder Hey, Liverpool

Infant Feeding: Anatomy of a Controversy 1973-1984. Edited by John Dobbing. Pp 169: £16.50 hardback. Springer-Verlag, 1988. ISBN 3-540-19514-9.

This book gives a well written and reasoned account of a controversy which concerned Europe, the United States, and the Third World over a period of more than 10 years. It gives a fascinating insight into the relationships between multinational companies (as exemplified in this case by Nestlé), consumer organisations, activists, and the mass media; the pressures which can be brought to bear by one upon the others; and the misunderstandings and acrimony which can arise when interested parties become involved. It ends on a mixed note of optimism that the conflict has been resolved to the apparent satisfaction of all parties and caution that the International Code of Marketing of Breast

Milk Substitutes agreed in the end may prove to be unique of its kind.

The editor, Professor John Dobbing, himself contributes two chapters to the book including the epilogue. His earlier chapter gives a commentary on the charges made and, in doing so, provides a concise but clear account of the necessity for breast milk substitutes given the premise that breast feeding is best if possible. It could be read with value by all those concerned with infant feeding.

He calls upon two coauthors, one an American business writer and public affairs analyst, the other a French novelist and investigative journalist. Both have been particularly interested in the infant food controversy since 1981. Between them they give a clear account of the history of the controversy from its beginnings to its resolution and, while this account perhaps shows Nestlé as the predominantly injured party, neither author apparently has an axe to grind so the account must be regarded as balanced.

While this book is perhaps not one which might be expected to be found in every paediatric library, it is well worth being read by anyone with an interest in infant feeding. The necessity for breast milk substitutes will remain with us indefinitely, and an understanding of the conflict between interested parties provided by this book may help to prevent such damaging and drawn out argument in the future.

J ALLGROVE
CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN
Newham General Hospital,
Plaistow, London

Paediatric Data Interpretation. By J Walter, S Lenton, and C M Gabriel. Pp 189: £7.95 paperback. Butterworth Scientific, 1987. ISBN 0-407-00425-4.

This is a carefully written book of 139 data interpretation questions of the type used in the MRCP Part II written section. In the second part of the book the answers are given with a reasonably comprehensive discussion on why these are correct. References are made to the appropriate pages of the standard textbooks in most cases but occasionally to useful review articles. The authors give only the correct answers and not the nearly correct ones. The recognition of a reasonable but not ideal answer would have given them an opportunity to have reviewed the differential diagnosis more

fully in the discussion and would have been a more accurate simulation of the real examination where we believe examiners award at least some marks for less than perfect answers.

This book is more than just an examination practice resource. Many paediatricians would find attempting the questions entertaining and helpful in demonstrating to them areas of their own knowledge which are a little thin. The subjects covered are obviously selected by the nature of the data which can be printed in the book. There are examples of most of the laboratory reports that might have arrived on paediatric units in an average year as well as electrocardiograms, electroencephalograms, audiograms, centile charts, family trees, renal scans, cardiac catheter results, etc. Practising paediatricians would find this a stimulating and exacting exercise with sufficient detail in the discussion of the answers to provide a helpful update or reminder.

This book is a valuable resource for paediatricians in training who are preparing for the MRCP Part II and an entertaining method of revision and update for the rest of us.

G S CLAYDEN
CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN
St Thomas's Hospital,
London SE1 7EH

Textbook of Pediatric Gastroenterology. Edited by M Silverberg and F Daum. Pp 511: £34.00 hardback. Wolfe Medical, 1987. ISBN 0-815-176-821.

The second edition of this relatively short, multiauthor textbook aims to provide basic and practical information of interest to all clinicians caring for children with gastrointestinal disorders and hopes to be of value to a wider readership including 'medical students, academic faculty, basic scientists, allied health personnel and surgeons'. Hepatic disorders are excluded, although there are chapters on bile acid metabolism and the exocrine pancreas. Normal and abnormal nutrition, surgical emergencies in infancy, and laboratory methods are also covered in separate chapters. The authors, all from centres in the United States and experts in their field, have certainly succeeded in providing up to date medical information in a clear, compact, and uncluttered text. Succinct summaries of morphological and physiological information help to clarify points of clinical

relevance. Flow diagrams, photomicrographs, clinical photographs, and radiographs amplify the text, which is well referenced with an up to date bibliography.

The general paediatrician, confronted with a gastrointestinal problem, will find much of practical value in this book and may well be tempted to delve further. The paediatric gastroenterologist will find clear and useful summaries of gastrointestinal topics. At £34 this book is excellent value for money and should certainly be in the local postgraduate centre library.

N EVANS
CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN
Royal Alexandra Hospital
for Sick Children,
Brighton BN1 3JN

Handbook of Child Health Assessment. Biopsychosocial Perspectives. By Paul Karoly. Pp 677: no price stated, hardback. John Wiley, 1988.

This book gives an interesting insight into the developing field of child health psychology. Like its subject matter it is more of an emergent than a tangible accomplishment, but it should make useful reading for its main target readership of psychologists and sociologists.

It follows a multiauthor format and is written largely by North American psychologists. It covers a wide and even diverse variety of areas. Among others, there are reviews on the psychological aspects of chronic illness in childhood, on abdominal pains, children's responses to hospitalisation, child health concepts, on assessing risk for addictive behaviours in adolescence, and on accident prevention. As implied in the title, there are a number of chapters devoted to the assessment of the sick child, detailing an enormous array of psychological tests (neuropsychological and psychophysiological, educational, 'cognitive-behavioural', on temperament, personality and social skills, family function). It was intriguing to see that there is a family 'hardiness' index and even a FAPGAR or family Apgar test!

There are some drawbacks in the approach reflected in the book. The diversity of the subject matter results in an apparent lack of cohesion and direction, the abundant use of tests and questionnaires makes it seem mechanical and at times superfluous, and it is sometimes difficult to see the clinical relevance of