Archives of Disease in Childhood 1994; 70: 254


Thomas Huxley once remarked that the greatest tragedy of science was the slaying of beautiful hypotheses by ugly facts. The research into cystic fibrosis is a classic example but at long last there is real hope that the pool of knowledge obtained from molecular studies with the delta F508 and other cystic fibrosis associated mutations will lead to the development of effective medical treatments. Anyone with whatever interest in cystic fibrosis will find these and other issues discussed in this delightful volume, which contains a series of independent scientific essays. Although there are 34 contributors, predominantly from the USA and Canada, the data are well presented and written in succinct fashion. Inevitably some topics overlap and so this is not a distracting nuisance. The text consists of three parts, each devoted to genetics, cell biology, and clinical aspects respectively. If you enjoy physiology then you will find the coverage of the gene fairly easy to understand. The section dealing with cell biology will exercise your ‘little grey cells’ to the full and you will surely appreciate that the gene, cystic fibrosis and its nature is already almost out of date but none the less the section contains a wealth of factual and useful information. The gene, sense of independent scientific essays are briefly discussed – it is apparent that the conflicting nature of observations had been based on far too small sample groupings. A concise and practical account is offered in the chapter on prenatal diagnosis.

The choice of subject matter in the clinical section is a surprise in a book devoted to ‘current topics’. The busy physician will gain most by reading the chapter on the prospects for gene therapy, protein replacement, and the measures employed to regulate ion transport. Those with long memories may enjoy a nostalgic look at 50 years of cystic fibrosis. I found this chapter in a rather pedestrian account of the pseudomonas infections in cystic fibrosis. Neonatal screening and the various modes of early diagnosis are remarked upon specifially for my liking and surely comments regarding IRT (immunoreactive trypsin) sensitivity and specificity relate to pre and analytical problems not the assay itself. The final chapter contains a useful list of the various national and international associations and their present and future aims in ‘defeating’ cystic fibrosis. Finally the three distinguished editors ask for suggestions for future issues – I would like to know more about the immunology of cystic fibrosis, sweating and its mechanisms, mucus secretion and composition and of course, fresh up date chapters on cell biology. This volume is an excellent start and I look forward to future editions with a great deal of enthusiasm and expectations.

J A KUZEMKO
Consultant paediatrician


contributions. The topics covered range from individual therapies, family and group therapy as well as pharmacological approaches and a review of inpatient treatments. There is a group of chapters dealing with the all important consultative and liaison work, parenting breakdown and the subsequence treatment, treatment of trauma, how we organise treatment services, and a comprehensive review of preventive approaches within child psychiatry. As befits a series of articles that were published in the Archives the accent is on the liaison between ourselves and hospital and community paediatricians. The only omission is perhaps behavioural and cognitive behavioural approaches which are undertaken with the child directly, as opposed to a consultative approach through parents which are well covered in the book. I will recommend this book to the groups for whom it is aimed, but I am sure that its appeal will be wider, as it forms such a helpful anapt patient abuse and the develop developmental syndromes. If this book appears to have all the answers, then this is folly on our part. It doesn’t, of course, but this is a satisfyingly complete account, well suited to its function as a clinician’s handbook.

The text covers each of the major areas of abuse, including chapters on sexual abuse of children with special needs, fetal problems, and poisoning, suffocation, and Munchausen syndrome by proxy. Some of the material has been previously published in the ‘ABC’ series, but is here considerably and usefully expanded. There is a good deal of helpful forensic and pathological data, and I was pleased to see the nonsense often written about the ages of bruises receiving a thorough and authoritative review. Inevitably, findings will continue to spark controversy for some time yet, but the account here is by and large well balanced. Developmental, emotional, and social factors are well covered in the remaining chapters as are some of the more difficult and ambiguous emotional features of child sexual abuse. Useful case histories illustrate the points made.

Some later chapters deal with management, psychological, and legal aspects of abuse. It is useful to have a table of ‘tricks’ that barristers play, but techniques in dealing with them would have been very welcome! Sadly, the memorandum of good practice seems to have missed the target.

The book is clearly written, and well illustrated with 102 plates. Again, several of these appeared in the ABC series. One small point, placing a black mark across a child’s eyes in a photograph is rather irritating when the legend asks us to note the child’s ‘radar-like gaze and sunken eyes’!

I did not find the editorship to be of a comparable high standard. There is considerable duplication, so that child protection conferences are for example covered once under physical abuse and again in the chapter on management. A case history given in the child with fetal abuse is suspiciously similar in every detail except that the abuse is directed to one given in the chapter on neglect. My main grumble, however, is with the way the book handles some of the grey areas. Disputed custody issues are mentioned in two sentences as a false memory syndrome is not referred to. Ritual abuse seems somewhat uncritically accepted, without mention of the supposed supernatural events reported, lack of forensic evidence, lack of a cultural context, or the manipulation of the subject by some religious groups. Some excellent reviews of the subject are quoted from so selectively and so far out of context as to be unrecognisable.

Having got that off my chest, overall I would say this forms a useful introduction to the subject for aspiring paediatricians, and source of useful data and food for thought for the more experienced practitioners.

A STANTON
Consultant community paediatrician


It is customary for trainees in general psychiatry to have an opportunity to work in child psychiatry as part of their training. However, child and adolescent psychiatry practice varies considerably from adult psychiatry. This book has 18 chapters as part of a series of Royal College of Psychiatry seminars intended to help junior doctors during their training years. It is a multi-authored book by experienced child and adolescent psychiatrists. It provides a comprehensive and practical introduction into the subject of child and adolescent psychiatry. It follows a standard textbook approach but most chapters are short and easy to read. Chapters include the history of child psychiatry, normal social and cognitive development and delays that are of relevance to child psychiatric practice, and aetiological factors. There are detailed descriptions of classification systems in child psychiatry and of individual clinical syndromes divided according to the developmental stages at which they are most troublesome or apparent. There are sections describing the various treatment modes in child psychiatry as well as specific chapters on child abuse and disorders of parenting, forensic child and adolescent psychiatry, liaison work, and on continuities between child and adult problems.

The book is probably of more relevance to a psychiatrist than a paediatric reader and there is limited coverage of the problems most commonly encountered at the paediatric clinic. It should, however, be useful as an introductory subject to the child and adolescent psychiatry for trainees in psychiatry.

M E GARRALDA
Professor of child and adolescent psychiatry

As the authors themselves observe in the preface, ‘If this book appears to have all the answers, then this is folly on our part’. It doesn’t, of course, but this is a satisfyingly complete account, well suited to its function as a clinician’s handbook.

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