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.

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 this is a significantly expanded version. 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 debunking.

Inevitably, some topics overlap, especially in the diagnosis of sexual abuse. However, I don't think that this is 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 description 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 enrich your knowledge of the epithelial ion transport, CFTR (cystic fibrosis transmembrane regulator) and its functions, and the ABC superfamily of protein transporters which is causing a great deal of excitement at the moment.

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 the chapter on a rather pedestrian account of the pseudomonas infections in cystic fibrosis. Neonatal screening and the various molecular techniques are covered in an excellent but predictable chapter on the genetics of cystic fibrosis. I found the chapter on 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 community paediatrician


Thomas Housey once remarked that the great 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 good bibliography, which is a major area of cystic fibrosis.


David P Jones
Consultant child and family psychiatrist


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 been edited as part of a series of Royal College of Psychiatrists 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 to 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 and abnormal development as well as 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 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 paediatrician and there is limited coverage of the problems most commonly encountered at the paediatric clinic. It should, however, be useful as an introduction to the subject of child and adolescent psychiatry for trainees in psychiatry.

M E GARRALDA
Professor of child and adolescent psychiatry


As if the above reading was not enough, there is a comprehensive list of further reading. This book is published as a complementary volume to the most important review of child abuse ever published: the Royal College of Psychiatrists' report on child abuse in 1989. This book, which is perhaps less authoritative and balanced than the Royal College of Psychiatrists' report, contains valuable information on the prevention and management of child abuse.