

## Book reviews

### ASSESSMENT OF HEARING DISABILITY GUIDELINES FOR MEDICO/LEGAL PRACTICE

P. F. King, R. R. A. Cole, M. E. Lutman  
and D. W. Robinson.  
Whurr Publishers Ltd: London. 1992.  
ISBN 1 870332 040. Price: £14.95.

Although it is the natural successor of the booklet of the same name published in 1983 and recommended by the British Association of Otolaryngology and British Society of Audiology, the so called 'Blue Book', this is an entirely different animal. Less restrained authors would have entitled it 'Everything you need to know about Noise Induced Deafness'. Packed into the hundred pages of the 'Black Book', as it has already been called by Judge Lachs, there is advice about every aspect of the assessment of hearing disability and what should be included in a Medico/Legal Report. Topics range from the calibration of audiometers to the procedure for testing bone conduction, sources of error in audiometry to detection of spurious hearing thresholds (SHTL), mandatory requirements for the evaluation of attributable hearing loss to apportioning disability between employers. The book is the product of an Inter-Society Working Group representing the British Society of Otolaryngology, British Society of Audiology, British Association of Audiological Physicians and British Association of Audiological Scientists set up in 1985 which has met twenty-five times to distil the painstaking study of the worlds literature and other relevant material for which individual authors have taken special responsibility. Professor Hinchcliffe attended all the meetings but at the eleventh hour decided that he did not wish his name to be included in the authorship.

The many Otologists who are likely to be involved in preparing reports in cases of suspected noise induced deafness until the end of the millennium when it is estimated that new cases will be reduced to a trickle will be glad of an authoritative reference book to support their expert evidence. They will also find eleven pages of glossary as well as two pages of abbreviations to help them interpret the ever growing terminology. There are tables to determine hearing thresholds and disability attributable to age associated hearing loss in men and women, the expected effect of continuous sound pressure levels in the average man and percentage disability as a function of the hearing in the better ear. The arguments for using 1, 2 and 3 kHz rather than 1, 2 and 4 kHz as a 'surrogate' for measuring disability are set out. According to my dictionary a surrogate means deputizing, particularly in relation to Bishops in the practice of confirmation and the use of this word may help the 'Black Book' to become the Bible of noise induced deafness but I would have found it easier to understand if it had been said that the loss at these frequencies

should be the starting point or basis for estimating disability. The book recommends at Lutman's suggestion that the sum of the losses 1, 2 and 3 kHz rather than the average should be used in calculations and this would certainly help to avoid using awkward fractions. The book is already in great demand and you should not be surprised if you have to wait for your copy whilst the publishers are reprinting. Perhaps future editions could have an index.

Charles Smith.

### A NEW SHORT TEXTBOOK OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY

M. S. McCormick, W. J. Primrose and  
I. J. MacKenzie. Edward Arnold: London. 1992.  
ISBN 0 340 39802 7. Price £14.99.

The new edition of this short text book for medical students appears 18 years after the last edition and has been completely rewritten by its three new authors. The book is (inevitably at this price) a paperback and is well presented with a clear print and sufficient diagrams, black and white photographs and tables to avoid its looking too daunting for its intended readership. The prose is generally concise, simple and, I found, easily digested.

The book is divided into four sections: the ear, the nose and sinuses, the mouth and salivary glands, and the throat. Each section starts conventionally with a commendably brief but quite adequate account of the embryology, surgical anatomy and physiology of its subject but thereafter the authors have eschewed the traditional manner of the general textbook and have employed a 'symptomatic' approach. So, for instance, the ear is covered in chapters headed 'earache', 'deafness', 'vertigo' etc. This system generally works well and should appeal to its intended readership but carries the significant disadvantage of repetition. This seemed particularly so in the otology section where most of the conditions covered present with several of the symptoms used for chapter headings, hence malignant otitis externa is described in three separate chapters—something of a luxury in a 'short textbook'! In fairness, the authors have clearly anticipated this problem and deal with it very adequately in most cases by cross references, lists and a comprehensive index.

Less excusable was the repetition of minor details: the relevance of cotton buds in otitis externa is probably worth a mention but not five times! Equally irritating was the unacceptably high incidence of misprints some of which occurred in paragraph headings and diagrams. Taken together, this suggests that the proof reading might have been better.

The book sets out to cover all aspects of ENT to final MBChB level and I believe it does this with something to spare. However some important areas were thinly covered:

acoustic neuromas merited just one page; there was scant mention of MRI; obstructive sleep apnoea, although well described in adults, was not covered in children; and AIDS (surely a most likely examination topic at present) received just three short references.

A book of this length written for students cannot afford the luxury of controversy and, in general, this text avoids them. There was however the occasional surprise in store for the more experienced reader such as the advice that patients should be warned of the risk of facial palsy before consenting to myringoplasty, the inclusion of cochlear otosclerosis as a cause of sudden hearing loss, and the optimistic statement that chronic sinusitis has been 'virtually eradicated'.

Despite these relatively minor criticisms I am happy to recommend this book for its all round excellence and the wealth of information it packs into its 213 pages; if widely adopted it could do much to correct the often lamentable level of ENT training amongst medical students. I particularly liked the chapters on neck masses (unambiguously entitled 'neck lumps'), 'headaches', tracheostomy and (much neglected in ENT texts) dental pathology. The section on hearing aids, often something of a mystery to doctors as well as medical students, was both brief and lucid. My GP vocational trainee found it much the most readable ENT textbook she had tried and far more instructive than its better illustrated rivals. I think the authors and publishers would be justified in expanding the indications for this keenly priced text to include General Practitioners, Casualty Officers and ENT Housemen.

Brian O'Reilly.

## SYNOPSIS OF OPERATIVE ENT SURGERY

Brian J. G. Bingham and Maurice R. Hawthorne.  
Butterworth Heinemann: Oxford. 1992.  
ISBN 0 7506 1359 9. Price: £35.00.

This is a companion text to *Synopsis of Otolaryngology* by Gray and Hawthorne. The latter was aimed at ENT trainees and is a clear, concise presentation of the principles and practice of otolaryngology. This new book has a similar style and provides an affordable and informative guide to ENT operative surgery. It is easy to read and should make it a popular textbook rather than a reference book.

The book is not just a descriptive operative text. It has useful chapters on preparation for surgery, basic principles of technique, anaesthesia, reconstructive materials, paediatric ENT surgery and procedures carried out in accident and emergency departments.

The chapters on operative surgery cover the common ENT operations but not the more complex head and neck reconstructive operations. There are clear and up-to-date sections on the surgical treatment of vertigo, endoscopic sinus surgery, endoscopy of the aerodigestive tract, voice restoration following laryngectomy and the general principles for the use of flaps in reconstructive surgery. In each chapter there are sections that discuss the indications for surgery, pre-operative considerations, risks of operations, post-operative care and the management of complications. Most of the illustrations are original. All are of good quality, and enhance the text. The operative sections have included several small pieces of information gained from experience and usually

passed on by word of mouth, but often omitted from standard operative textbooks.

This concise 'synoptic' text of operative surgery is well written and can be highly recommended. It should be especially useful to those starting their training in ENT surgery and preparing for the F.R.C.S. Part II.

Elfy B. Chevretton.

## PATHOLOGICAL BASIS OF EAR SURGERY

A. Belal Jr., Alexandria Ear Center, 37 Syria Street, Alexandria, Egypt, 1992. \$15.00.

Essentially the title of this loose-leaf book says it all. The work of Professor Belal is well known from the publications previously associated with him, particularly during his time as a Fellow of the House Research Institute in Los Angeles.

The work is divided into three sections; Anatomical variance of surgical importance, Pathological variance of surgical importance and post-operative pathology and complications.

Most aspects of surgical anatomy and pathology are included and at the end of each chapter, of which there are 25 in all, is a list of relevant references and these will be particularly helpful to those wishing to follow up particular aspects in more detail.

However, the style of the publication which is essentially a bound photostat of 196 pages plus the index, loses quite a bit from the mode of production. Had the same material been better produced, particularly the pathological illustrations which lose considerably from being photostated black and white copies, it would have been greatly improved. The text itself is easy to read and highly relevant to all otological surgeons and well worth the price. However, had the author known the potential market for this book then I am sure it could have been more professionally produced which would have added greatly to its saleability.

All this aside, the text is well set out and a lot of thought has gone into its production. Sadly, I found in my particular copy pages 157 to 165 missing and pages 166 to 194 duplicated but at the price it is strongly recommended but with the limitations in respect of the pathological illustrations.

John Booth.

## DEVELOPMENT OF AUDITORY AND VESTIBULAR SYSTEMS II

Ed. R. Roman, Elsevier Press, Amsterdam. 1992.  
ISBN 0 444 812636. Price: \$192.50 (Dfl.375).

This volume is devoted to all aspects of the development of the peripheral and central components of the auditory and vestibular systems over the last 10 years. The book is outstanding in bringing together the very best workers in a multiplicity of scientific fields including anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology, otolaryngology, neurology and psychology to produce a comprehensive 'state-of-the-art' book on this subject.

There are authoritative reviews on each topic and despite the diversity of the contributors there is little redundant and overlapping material. Undoubtedly, the novice in this area