Book reviews

Shock wave applications in musculoskeletal disorders. Edited by Jan-Dirk Rompe. Pp 82. New York: Thieme Stuttgart, 2002. ISBN: 3-13-130121-X. £66.50. €89.00.

This slim, elegantly produced but expensive monograph provides an invaluable introduction to the physics of shock waves and their effects on the tissues, mostly of the rabbit, including potential harm to vessels and nerves, and a rather narrow therapeutic window for tendons.

Reports on clinical treatment cover plantar fasciitis, tennis elbow, calcific tendinitis of the supraspinatus and nonunion of fractures. With regard to the last, experimental promise remains so far unfulfilled clinically. Trials in resistant tennis elbow have shown an advantage of the use of extracorporeal shock-wave therapy (ESWT) as against placebo in one of two studies, but one study favoured the use of surgery. In plantar fasciitis ESWT showed variable but probably worthwhile improvement and in calcific tendinitis of supraspinatus a trial of ESWT against surgery, with strict exclusion by MRI of other causes of the pain, showed equal benefit at one year.

The role of ESWT as a physical treatment has yet to be established by further, large, well-designed trials.

Anthony G. White

Lumbar disc herniation. Edited by Robert Gunzburg and Marek Szpalski. Pp 320. Philadelphia, etc: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2002. ISBN: 0-7817-3600-5. \$79.95.

It is not often that there is a monograph published specifically on herniations of the lumbar disc. This is a multiauthor work, and thus the text is somewhat fragmented and variable in quality. The editors have a good reputation for the organising of symposia leading to the publication of a monograph. This book follows the format of its predecessors.

I received the book at a time when I was confronted by two separate but relevant medicolegal questions. The first was whether an individual with a specific injury was likely to have had a prolapse of a disc caused by a particular injury, and the second was what the probability was of an individual, identified as having degeneration of a disc but with no history of back pain, developing prolapse. I used this book in an attempt to answer these questions.

The first chapter by Malcolm Pope on biomechanics suggests that the answer to the first question is in the affirmative. There is very little else in any of the chapters about the role of injury. If we turn to the chapters on epidemiology by Gunnar Andersson and by Ito and others then the answer to the second question is not clear. Professor Andersson has written on this topic before and I did not feel that this was one of his better efforts. Chapter 10 by Norbert Boos suggests that it is quite possible to have asymptomatic degeneration of the disc without developing a prolapse of the disc. There is no clear answer to the question.

Turning to treatment, there are chapters on non-operative treatment, which are helpful since this topic is rarely covered adequately, and chapters comparing osteopathic manipulation with chemonucleolysis and chemonucleolysis with non-operative treatment. In regard to the latter the first suggests that manipulation is as good as chemonucleolysis and the second that chemonucleolysis is better than non-operative treatment and in the longer term as good as open surgery. Many spinal surgeons would be concerned over the recommendation to use osteopathic manipulation in patients with symptomatic disc prolapses. All surgeons have had experience of patients who have undoubtedly been made worse by manipulation in these specific circumstances. The reported trial has only 20 patients in each group and therefore this item should be treated cautiously. The book has a number of chapters on surgical treatment which describe different approaches to the problem without telling us which is the best option.

The monograph has two chapters on replacement of the disc and two on outcome. One of these focuses on issues of fitness to work. This is of help to those making medicolegal opinions. There are separate chapters on prolapse of the disc in children and in adolescents. The distinction between these age groups is poorly described and the result confusing.

In conclusion, most of the chapters are quite short, although variable in quality. The editors should conduct a more vigorous editorial policy in future monographs. There are some interesting chapters for the expert spinal surgeon, but I do not think that this book would be very helpful to a general practitioner or a general orthopaedic surgeon wishing to update themselves on the latest issues in the management of herniations of the lumbar disc.

Jeremy Fairbank

Controversies in spine surgery: surgical techniques and medical treatment. Volume 2. Edited by Thomas A. Zdeblick, Edward C. Benzel, Paul A. Anderson, and Charles B. Stillerman. Pp 324. St Louis: Quality Medical Publishing Inc, 2002. ISBN: 57626-143-3. \$85.00.

This work specifically addresses the areas of maximal conjecture and uncertainty in spinal surgery. The purpose is not necessarily to produce solutions and recommendations about best practice, but to allow experts and strong proponents of particular points of view to air their perceptions in the light of existing knowledge.

The topics for debate and argument include the following: 1) treatment of scoliosis – posterior rotational reduction (Dubousset), technical aspects of the posterior correction using the Universal Spine System (John Webb) and anterior correction involving the Zielke and subsequent Texas Scottish Rite Hospital instrumentation (Charles E. Johnston II); 2) cervical decompression and fusion – allograft, autograft, fibula or iliac crest, posterior or anterior, anterior corpectomy and strut grafting *versus* multiple level discectomies and interbody fusion; and 3) decompression for myelopathy – anterior or posterior and laminectomy (Ducker and Zeidman) compared with laminoplasty (Herkowitz). There is a particularly helpful section about the history and types of monitoring of the spinal cord in which Nancy Epstein covers somatosensory evoked potentials and Richard Osenbach highlights cases which are best suited for monitoring and those which are not. Treatment of herniation of the thoracic disc by transthoracic, trans-

pedicular and video-assisted endoscopic approaches is covered. The ideal treatment for herniation of the lumbar disc is debated comparing conservative with operative, chemonucleolysis with microdiscectomy, microscope with loupe and microdiscectomy with endoscopic discectomy.

The role of discography and MRI in the diagnosis of discogenic back pain is outlined in particularly well-balanced chapters from Daniel Murrey and Edward Hanley and from Charles Aprill. After establishing how difficult it can be to find the source of back pain the final chapters cover the conservative and operative treatment of low back pain. There are advocates for posterior lumbar interbody fusion (Casey Lee), 360° fusion (David Selby), anterior lumbar interbody fusion (Rob Fraser) and laparoscopic anterior lumbar interbody fusion (Heim, Altamari and Norek).

The editors could have done better in one or two sections in which the authors' enthusiasm was such as to produce a number of incomprehensible sentences and word usage so novel that it overwhelmed even the American version of my word-processor's grammar and spell check. Nevertheless, the book provides interesting reading and is very definitely meant for those who already have good insight into the subject matter. Illustrations are kept to a minimum, leaving room for the controversial topics to be covered in considerable detail with provision of a comprehensive list of references. The format of an unstructured debate inevitably results in some repetition with authors going over old ground before providing the benefits of their own experience. The arguments are well made, however, and leave the readers free to draw their own conclusions from the well-presented material.

Robert Marshall

Knee arthroplasty. Edited by *Thomas P. Sculo* and *Ermanno A. Martucci*. Pp 250. Wien, etc: Springer, 2001. ISBN: 3-211-8531-8. €127.00.

This volume is a compilation of personal views on the developments and controversies surrounding knee replacement over the last ten years. The wider aspects receive an informative and accurate coverage. In short chapters, the various authors review topics ranging from surgical techniques in soft-tissue balancing to the selection of implants together with their early and late complications. Each chapter is brief, well set out and easy to read with accurate paragraph headings. Mostly, the text is in prose form, but the chapter on unicompartamental replacement is written as brief notes. Many of the illustrations are excellent, but in several chapters space is taken up by operative photographs and drawings which do not add to the text and are redundant.

The chapter on the mechanics of the patellofemoral joint gives an excellent overview of the design of implants for resurfacing in total knee replacement, but no reference is made to isolated resurfacing. Preoperative planning, surgical technique and soft-tissue balancing are all appropriately covered.

Debate surrounding retention of the cruciate ligaments is comprehensively reviewed and mobile meniscal-bearing designs are assessed from their mechanical aspects. Some conclusions are drawn from limited outcome studies. The final chapter entitled 'Miscellanea', is curious in that it includes only a short review of knee revision surgery and, given the wide overview of problems, is a disappointing aspect of the book; but no doubt the plan to keep the volume short was paramount.

Overall, it is an excellent read as a discussion of the present controversies and problems surrounding knee arthroplasty, but its format and the lack of an index make it inadequate as a reference book for teaching libraries.

T. M. Bucknill

The evolution of orthopaedic surgery. Edited by *Leslie Klenerman*. Pp 252. London: Royal Society of Medicine Press Ltd, 2002. ISBN: 185-315-4699. £20.00.

We should all be aware of our roots. Today, the orthopaedic surgery which we practise is a sophisticated and highly technical art. In order to appreciate the significance of this we need to be aware of the evolution of the specialty and to understand the way in which these developments have come about. Leslie Klenerman has brought together a distinguished collection of knowledgeable people who have described the origins and growth of the particular aspects of orthopaedic surgery in which they are experts. They give an account of the earliest attempts at the management of familiar problems and describe those who took on such tasks. They have produced an engrossing story.

The second half of the 20th century saw the full emergence of orthopaedic surgery as a specialty. It is easy to forget the basis on which this was achieved. The older surgeons may be aware of this, but the younger may not unless they have the innate curiosity to enquire. This book achieves its aim of describing the evolution of the specialty. All orthopaedic surgeons should have a copy, if only as a means of explaining their origins to others. It is a fascinating read and leaves one full of admiration for the invention and stoicism of our forebears. Order this inexpensive book today!

Frank Horan

Sports injuries: recognition and management. 3rd edition. Edited by *Michael A. Hutson*. Pp 251. Oxford, etc: Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0-19-363271-X. £69.95.

There have been advances and changes in sports medicine over the last five years and this new edition of an important textbook on the subject has been updated to reflect them. It has a wealth of detail, clearly laid out with a remarkable collection of photographs and illustrations. It is aimed at the practising clinician who deals with sports injuries in the outpatient or primary-care setting.

Injuries are categorised by the part of the body. The latter half of the book deals more generically with overuse injuries, investigations, treatment, rehabilitation and emergency medicine. The text is extensively referenced and further reading is recommended. There is a useful index for quick identification of any problem. The book is strongest in its explanation, description and illustration of clinical signs and examination. These are beautifully and clearly shown.

It does not attempt to be a comprehensive encyclopaedia of all possible sports injuries, but concentrates on the more common or important injuries, particularly those which are frequently missed or poorly managed. Prevention and treatment are discussed within each chapter and also separately with rehabilitation. Manipulations and injections cannot be learned clinically from a text, but the descriptions are well illustrated and provide a careful reminder of the correct technique.

The author is well known in sports medicine and musculoskeletal circles as a senior practitioner and specialist who is also an experienced teacher of many of those who are involved at the 'coalface' of sports medicine. Some excellent co-authors have contributed to certain chapters as specialists in certain areas of sports medicine.

This excellent book will be both read and used as a reference by involved physicians.

Richard Budgett