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# Book Reviews

## DISORDERS OF THE NOSE AND PARANASAL SINUSES

### Diagnosis and Management

K. G. Marshall and Elhamy L. Attia (Pp. 370; Figs; £28)
Bristol: Wright 1987 ISBN 0 88416 482 9

Why, one might ask, should anyone write a book on disorders of the nose and paranasal sinuses for the primary care physician? The authors of this book are associate professors in family medicine and otolaryngology at Magill University and hold clinical posts in their respective specialties at Montreal General Hospital. They posed this question and feel that the need is justified because of the imbalance in learning at undergraduate level with the result that a primary care physician entering practice discovers that he has a surfeit of knowledge in some areas and a virtual vacuum in others. Whilst the text is intended for the practising primary care physician, the authors hope that it will also be of interest to undergraduate students, to trainees in otolaryngology and even to practising otolaryngologists. In addition to the usual chapter headings that one expects in a book of this nature, there are chapters devoted to the common cold, disorders of smell, post nasal drip, snoring and sleep apnoea, basic immunology, and facial pain. Each chapter gives a subjective history and objective examination and poses a series of questions which are answered in the succeeding paragraphs of the chapter. This approach is extremely readable and is supported by good illustrations and useful tables. At the end of each chapter there is a comprehensive set of references.

This book certainly has a place in the library of the primary care physician and the chapters on facial pain, allergic rhinitis and sinusitis alone should prove very useful in making a diagnosis and determining the management of these sometimes confusing conditions. This book should certainly stimulate interest and it is hoped that the knowledge gained from it, together with an acquired expertise in examination of the nose and nasopharynx, will help the primary care physcian in the management of diseases of the nose and paranasal sinuses.

The book is available in paperback but would be more attractive if the cost was less than £28.

N. F. Weir

## THE HUMAN VOCAL TRACT
### Anatomy, Function, Development and Evolution

E. S. Crelin

As one who has spent over 15 years studying the comparative anatomy of the mammalian larynx I looked forward to reading this book with considerable anticipation. My initial enthusiasm was a little dampened by the suggestion in the Preface that all laryngectomies had a radical neck dissection and the extremely poor quality of many of the ilustrations.

The text is a strange mixture of science, pseudoscience and conjecture peppered with North American idioms—indeed it is difficult to determine exactly what type of readership is expected. Despite the clear conviction that Dr Crelin knows more comparative anatomy, palaeontology or paediatric laryngology than the experts, much of the discussion is superficial and in some instances—manifestly inaccurate!

After the first reading, irritated by the quality of the writing and the many unnecesary illustrations, I was quite prepared to dismiss this as another disappointing, poorly produced book. In this I was quite misled! Circumstances led to my spending several days sheltering from a hot sun on a Greek island and an opportunity to re-read. My original criticisms still apply but concealed within these pages is a fascinating proposition which deserves more scientific and rational consideration. If I have concluded correctly, Dr Crelin is saying that the prime reason mammals do not vocalise like man is because they have an intra oral tongue and a high larynx. Children only produce speech after the larynx descends! By making hollow rubber moulds of the vocal tract of humans of varying ages and chimpanzees—he confirms the hypothesis by altering the configuration whilst recording sound output. The infant larynx, prior to its descent around two years is similar in configuration to that of an adult chimpanzee and descent brings with it a posterior tongue. Of course this also allows an omnivorous diet and his assumption that all mammals excepting monotremes and man have a 'larynx locked into the nasopharynx' displays an ignorance of comparative anatomy and the relevant literature.

Drawings are produced of the shape of the changes in the rubber mould and then manipulated to produce various vowel sounds but no explanation as to how they, and the cross-sections which accompany these shapes, are constructed. Having convinced himself of the logic of the hypothesis he then moves on to the skull base. By studying the distance between the vomer and the site of



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the spheno-occipital synchlondrosis in humans of various ages and the chimpanzee, he considers that changes are related to the descent of the larynx and vocalisation. Unfortunately, no actual measurements are recorded nor the relationship to other anthropomorphological data. Large numbers of skull base drawings of little relevance adorn the section but fail to compensate for raw data, particularly with reference to other mammals.

Having dealt with mammalian evolution, casts of hominid fossal skulls are now examined to determine at what stage our ancestors first possessed the ability to vocalize. Applying similar criteria he concludes that the modern vocal tract evolved about 500,000 to one million years ago which would have allowed hominids to make articulate sounds providing, of course, that the necessary intracranial pathways were present. Indeed, he uses this study to definitively trace the evolution of the hominids despite the continuing conflict by palaeontologists on this controversial topic!

Despite the apparent disinterest in the views of experienced workers in related disciplines and a superficial and unsophisticated approach to the whole problem, this is in fact a stimulating book which raises many provocative issues. Ignore the quality of the text, the plethora of poor drawings and illustrations. Read it several times, talk to the experts for perhaps Dr Crelin is in fact right but for the wrong reasons.
D. F. N. Harrison.

## HEARING LOSS

Martin & Grover, £4.95. 18th August 1986.
Churchill Livingstone

Reading Hearing Loss, despite being a busman's holiday, has given me much pleasure. This edition puts into one, manageable sized book all the information that supporters of the hearing impaired are trying to impart every day.

The text is easy to read and understand. The contents are well divided into informative chapter headings and each chapter is subdivided and categorized for easy access. The print is a good size without being patronizing.

The subject of Hearing Loss is explained clearly and sensibly. I particularly endorse the section entitled 'Why do older people go deaf?'. The matter of fact technicalities help to put the subject into the perspective with which it should be viewed. The limitations of the assistance a hearing aid can provide are clearly explained and additional facilities, such as aids to daily living and other sources of assistance are noted in the final chapters. The glossary of terms in Audiology will help any member of the public feel more confident and at ease when seeking advice.

One small criticism is that a little more could be said about the care and safe keeping of batteries.

While it is not financially possible to present all our enquiring public with a copy of Hearing Loss, it would be most useful to have a supply available for purchase. The small outlay will be more than compensated by the fund of information and advice contained therein.

This is an ideal manual for the general public and will also be a useful textbook for new students in Audiology.
W. Rogers

## COLOUR ATLAS OF HEAD AND NECK SURGERY FACE, SKULL AND NECK

Jatin P. Shah

Head and neck surgery is undoubtedly photogenic. This publication has made full use of this feature with diagrams, fine colour photographs in sequence and a huge range of procedures neatly and sequentially laid out. The crowded anatomy, the ingenuity of the repairs and the way that skin, soft tissue and bone pirouette neatly into major resection defects is shown to full benefit. Usually these atlases are accompanied by very short notes; not so in this case, since a fullsome text accompanies each one or sequence of pictures. The Memorial Hospital has always been a force with which to be reckoned and the experience of the Centre is distilled in this publication. Quite clearly there is input from all the disciplines involved, including oral, facio-maxillary, plastic, ENT and general surgery. The operative environemnt and preparation of the patient is laid out in good measure. It is clear that larger operations are being done for smaller lesions and the very acceptable nature of the post-operative appearance of patients and their long term follow-up suggests a high degree of patient preparation and compliance. Some of the sequences of illustrations and legends are detailed indeed and need careful scrutiny, while a few exhibit 'missing links'.

In essence this is an excellent book of two hundred and fifty pages. A similar one on the oral cavity, oropharynx, hypo-pharynx, larynx, trachea, salivary and thyroid glands, endoscopic procedures and reconstructive surgery is destined to follow. This pair of publications will doubtless become well thumbed in all the libraries of those centres in which this type of work is carried out, for, once started, the attractive format keeps one turning the pages.
P. McKelvie.

## ADVANCES IN OTO-RHINO-LARYNGOLOGY Vol. 37: Otology Today

Edited by Gregorio Babighian

This book is the proceedings of the second conference held between the 1 and 5 April, 1986, under the title of Otology Today. A faculty of 52 invited speakers, delivering 60 contributions, was given during the workshop. Of these, 42 provided what, in most cases is an abstract of their talk, and these have been published under five headings: Basic Science, Diagnosis and Clinical Otol-

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