The Nd-YAG Laser in Ophthalmology: Principles and Clinical Applications of Photodisruption. By ROGER F STEINERT AND CARMEN A PULIAFITO. Pp. 154. £48.50. Saunders: Philadelphia. 1985.

This is an excellent book by two well known authors, and is to be recommended for those who wish to acquire an understanding of the neodymium-YAG laser and its clinical application. It is divided into two sections, the first covering laser fundamentals, optical breakdown, photodisruption, laser tissue interaction and the eye, and instrumentation. The second part discusses the clinical applications for both the anterior and posterior segments. The chapters on capsulotomy, pupillary membranes, and intraocular lenses are excellent. However, it is a shame that there is not equal coverage of iris procedures, especially as for most ophthalmologists capsulotomy and iridotomy are the commonest indications for YAG therapy. This may be because iridotomy in the USA is still investigational. A further criticism is that there is no mention of corneal endothelial damage, seen especially with increasing number of pulses and higher energy levels.

This is a clear well laid out book that makes essential reading for those embarking on the rapidly expanding field of YAG laser microsurgery.

J D JAGGER

Recent Advances in Ophthalmology. Vol. 7. Eds: S I DAVIDSON AND F T FRAUNFELDER. Pp. 223. £22.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1985.

This latest *Recent Advances in Ophthalmology* contains very well selected topics which are currently the subject of research and discussion in ophthalmology. Seventeen authors from the UK and the USA (with one exception, Professor Eisner, of Berne, Switzerland) cover therapy of herpes simplex, anterior chamber surgery, viscoelastic substances, radial keratotomy, intraocular lenses, congenital cataract, ocular phototoxicity, vitreous surgery, diabetic retinopathy, malignant melanomas, macular disease, glaucoma, and laser trabeculoplasty.

The illustrations are entirely black-and-white but of a high quality and well laid out with clear print. Each section usually provides a short introduction providing interesting background leading to the present advance in the subject. It is always satisfactory to be reminded that most advances in science are by gradual evolution. This evolutionary aspect is discussed in the section on intraocular lenses, but it is disappointing that this section has so little detail on complications, which are listed rather than given evaluation. Anterior segment surgery includes refractive keratoplasty and corneoscleral grafting, which has received wide attention in the ophthalmic literature. Pterygium surgical techniques are also included, but the equally important post-operative management, especially with topical steroids, gets no mention.

The selection of topics has been very good, and all practising ophthalmologists will find much to interest them. Of necessity there are a fair number of open ends in the topics discussed, but this adds to the value of the book and provides ideas for future advances. The references at the end of each section are full and again may lead the reader to further literature search.

JAMES L KENNERLEY BANKES

Ocular Differential Diagnosis. 3rd Edn. By FREDERICK HAMPTON ROY. Pp. 466. US\$30.00. Lea and Febiger: Philadelphia. 1984.

This book consists of lists of differential diagnosis set out in order of tissues or function involved, together with a short section of general signs and symptoms. There is an initial list of section headings, and each section begins with a list of subjects. While most lists are compiled with headings only, there are occasional remarks and even more rarely tables to assist in differential diagnosis. Each list is followed by references to the relevant ophthalmic literature.

Clearly this is a reference book to consult in times of difficulty. The text will appeal strongly to some readers, but others will find the unevenness of treatment and apparently capricious compilation of the lists irritating. The American terminology is also at times confusing. Much of the information can be obtained from standard works of reference, but some of the lists concerning symptoms or signs which cut across the systematic consideration of disease are very valuable.

This is not a book for the beginner, but an aide mémoire for the practising ophthalmologist, though having identified the possible diagnoses he will need in most cases to consult other sources for information about their differentiation. One of the most useful features is the full listing of drugs capable of producing each particular symptom or sign as a toxic effect. Certainly opinions will differ about the inclusions in and omissions from the lists. But then all lists of diagnoses are to some extent artificial and their bounds a question of semantics.

Perhaps the best understanding of the work, which is clearly the result of immense labour, is found in the author's preface; 'Material for this book has been used in computer systems to assist the ophthalmologist.'

D W HILL

Computer Essentials for the Ophthalmologist. Eds. DONALD R. SANDERS and GERALD E MELTZER. Pp. 143. US\$24.50. Slack: New Jersey. 1984.

This slim book with plastic bindings has as its objective the introduction of the ophthalmologist to computer technology. It contains chapters on the history of computers and how they work. Advice is given on the choice and purchase of the type of machine that might be of use to the ophthalmologist in a professional rather than a domestic capacity. The facilities offered by such common application packages as word processing, database, and spreadsheets are fully described.

This is a useful book and a reasonable start for any ophthalmologist seeking to become better acquainted with computers.

D J POWELL

Contemporary Issues in Ophthalmology. Vol 1. **Herpes Simplex Infections of the Eye.** Edited by FREDERICK C BLODI. Pp. 171. £37.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1984.

This short volume has chapters by several authors covering some important topics on herpes simplex infections of the eye. The first and last chapters are particularly useful, giving