

Book review

The Retina: A Model for Cell Biology Studies. Part 1. Eds. Ruben Adler and Debora Farber. Pp. 363. £44.00. Academic Press: Orlando, Florida. 1986.

Given the current expansion in terms of biological journals and in particular journals which cater for review articles, it is extremely difficult to define the role of books such as this. It is certainly not a book for the student of ophthalmology or for the medical student who wishes to learn about this particular system of the eye.

The book is obviously written for the specialist. The problem is which specialist. The book contains eight reviews, most of them extremely well written by leading authorities. What it lacks is the logic and guidance of a single editor. It resembles to some extent the sort of volumes that we are now used to seeing as a result of obscure meetings in even more obscure locations. All the scientific authors should consider the goal of their work before embarking on exercises of this kind.

Having been less than kind to the framework and concept

of this sort of volume I think the individual contributions are on occasion well worth reading by the hyperspecialist. Of particular interest are the chapters by C C Getch and M S Steinberg on 'Differential adhesion in neuronal development' and the chapter by J C Besharse on 'Photosensitive membrane turnover: differentiated membrane domains and cell-cell interaction.' Both these contributions give the reader an up-to-date review of their respective areas while at the same time presenting complex material in an eminently readable form. Other contributions unfortunately do not achieve this standard, and some degenerate into the obscure nomenclature of the hyper hyperspecialist.

In essence some chapters of this book will be extremely helpful to some people. However, very few will find the whole book of relevance. I can imagine this having a limited shelf life and would have preferred the contributions to be made to journals rather than to be reproduced as such a disjointed single volume.

JOHN MARSHALL

Notes

Ocular trauma

An International Congress on Ocular Trauma will take place in Tel-Aviv, Israel, on 19–24 February 1989. Further information from the Secretariat, International Congress on Ocular Trauma, PO Box 50006, Tel-Aviv 61500, Israel.

Royal Eye Hospital poster prize

A prize of £200 and a certificate will be awarded to the best poster presented at the Annual Congress of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom in

Harrogate, 20–22 April 1988. The prize will be allocated on the quality of the poster as well as on the way the presenter discusses his/her poster with the judges. It is therefore essential that the author is available at the meeting to present the poster in person. The first author of the poster presented must be under the age of 40 years at the time of the meeting, although there may be collaboration with older workers who may be named on the poster. The presentation of the prize will be made by the president at the annual dinner of the Society during the Annual Congress. Further details from the Honorary Secretary, OSUK, Bramber Court, 2 Bramber Road, London W14 9PQ.