Pathological and pharmacological studies using in vivo and in vitro models are presented in sessions 1 and 2. Results of clinical trials using anticoagulant treatment on cancer patients are included in the first session.

Mitogenic and chemotactic factors relevant to the subject are dealt with in session 3. The following session focuses attention on the interaction of tumour cells and platelets with the vascular endothelium and basement membranes. Papers in the last session deal with the molecular basis and specificity of tumour/cell-induced platelet aggregation.

The participants in this conference are recognised investigators in their respective fields and the high calibre of the reports reflects this expertise. Regrettably, the number of printing errors becomes rather conspicuous in some papers, detracting from the otherwise high quality of the text. This weakness apart, "Interaction of Platelets and Tumour Cells" offers a wide and updated perspective on the subject and should be useful to students, clinicians and research workers interested in this field.

A. Schor
Dept. Medical Oncology,
Christie Hospital & Holt Radium Institute,
Manchester.

Cancer-cell organelles. E. Reid, G. Cook & D.J. Morre, UK, John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 415 pp, 1982, £27.50.

Cancer cell organelles is one of a series of methodological surveys in Biochemistry; the volume is aimed at cancer research workers and is a compilation of data from many laboratories.

The first section of this volume is concerned with the preparation of tumour or effector cells from fresh tissue. An introduction by Prof. Peter Alexander draws the readers attention to the problems of selection and cell identification associated with the extraction of cells from tumours and this is followed by a series of presentations describing a range of methods for disaggregation and cell enrichment ranging from cell adherence to gradient and centrifugation techniques. Various methods for the culture of isolated cells are also described.

The bulk of the book describes methods for the isolation and purification of sub-cellular fractions of cells and their biochemical analysis. Methods are outlined for the preparation of almost any cell organelle which comes to mind. The techniques are clearly described with considerable practical detail and are well referenced, though, if anything, the text does seem to have been over-annotated and cross-referenced. Attention is also paid to the ultrastructural and biochemical characterisation of the various subfractions. This is a useful volume for the research worker concerned with the composition and function of transformed cells.

D.B. Jones
Department of Pathology,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Southampton,
Southampton.

Leucocyte function. Edited by Martin J. Cline., Methods in Haematology. Volume 3. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1981. £19.00.

This volume is the third of a series entitled "Methods in Haematology", in which a distinguished group of haematologists give an overall view of technical methods related to blood disorders.

There are 6 chapters dealing with specific topics in considerable detail. The first 3 examine techniques that are useful at the research level, while the remainder are devoted to methods with major relevance to clinical haematology.

The first chapter is concerned with the measure of granulocyte activities such as phagocytosis, respiratory burst and bacterial killing, while granulocyte chemotaxis is the subject of chapter 2. The cellular mechanism involved and the techniques that play a major role in the study of granulocyte functions are clearly expounded.

A clear and concise account of the characteristics and functions of the monocyte-macrophage system is given in chapter 3. Motility, release of chemical mediators, lymphocyte interaction, microbial and tumour killing are illustrated in a clear and balanced manner. Basic principles and the details of techniques for macrophage identification and the assessment of macrophage function are described.

Leucocyte antigens are described in chapter 4, with major emphasis on the structure, cell distribution and biological significance of HLA-antigens. Little information is given on monoclonal antibodies raised against normal haemopoietic and T cells. An up-to-date account of the advances made in this rapidly growing field, however, can be found in a section of volume 2 in the series (The leukemia cell).

Chapter 5 deals with development of in vitro growth of haemopoietic cells over the last 15 years. A clear, introductory review of current knowledge
on the early events of haemopoiesis, and the factors that govern them is presented. A detailed description of methods and protocols for performance of clonogenic assays for granulocyte-macrophage progenitor cells is provided, together with a reasoned discussion of their application to the study of haemopoietic disorders.

Chapter 6 discusses histochemical reactions of leukocytes. Illustration of the basic concepts and details of each reaction are followed by a careful discussion of their utility for the identification of the stages of development of normal blood cells, and in the differential diagnosis of leukaemia.

This is a publication of high quality, beautifully presented and well referenced. It will serve to broaden the outlook of haematologists by illustrating the value that techniques rarely used in routine work have in arriving at a correct understanding of leukocyte function.

Lina Matera
Istituto di Medicina Interna,
Università di Torino,
1A Cattedra di Patologia Speciale Medica,
Turin, Italy.

*Biochemical markers for cancer.* Edited by T. Ming Chu. Clinical and Biochemical Analysis, Vol. 11. Marcel Dekker, New York, 375 pp, £55.35.

The efforts to find tumour markers are very considerable, although the chances of finding really specific and sensitive markers for common tumours still seem to be remote. Unfortunately few of the tumours where early diagnosis would be strongly in the patient’s interest are associated with recognisable markers. Conversely so many of the cancers that are associated with unequivocal rises of biochemical markers in the blood or urine have often spread so as to render cure highly improbable. This book reviews the progress in finding and defining tumour markers and the challenge of how to use the knowledge gained so far, as well as containing the search for markers which at times becomes like the quest for the Holy Grail. There are written reviews of CEA, AFP, alkaline phosphatase and prostatic acid phosphatase, which with βHCG are the anchors in the tumour marker business. These are supported by informative chapters on ectopic hormone production, immunoglobulins, enzymes and polyamines as tumour markers. The special techniques for the differential diagnosis of the leukaemia using biochemical markers and the present status of hormone receptor protein research provide excellent material to broaden the base of the book. Trophoblastic tumours that are the paradigm for all who seek stochiometric relationships between numbers of cancer cells and marker levels are included in the book. Perhaps the only criticism is the absence of a chapter on statistics, as mathematical logic used in association with the present generation of computers can help to extract more information from the combination of clinical information and the levels of one or many analyses. The challenge is clearly to optimize the information that can be obtained by the combination of clinical, histological and biochemical assessment. Despite its omission, this is a sturdy volume, clearly achieving the editors’ objectives of being up-to-date, informative and showing some of the ways where progress may be achieved.

E.H. Cooper
Unit for Cancer Research, School of Medicine, Leeds.

New approaches in cancer therapy II. H. Cortes Funes & M. Rozencweig, New York, Raven Press, 185 pp, 1982, $55.80.

This book is a monograph based on a symposium organised by the European Organisation for the Research and Treatment of Cancer. It is divided into two sections, the first is devoted to new anticancer drugs with reviews on the podophyllotoxins, AMSA and PALA and provides an up-to-date appraisal of the merits of these drugs. The second section is devoted to combined modality therapy and covers all common tumours. Although there are some informative chapters the majority of the papers are short and there has unfortunately been no attempt at a critical editorial review. This has led to a variation in style and in a more formal setting I do not think some of the presentations would have been accepted as a publication. There are now several books of this type available and in view of the cost one must critically look at new volumes as they appear. The type of material presented is probably more readily available in the appropriate journals which contain authoritative reviews. I am afraid it does not compete at all well with many similar texts that are currently available.

P.M. Wilkinson
Dept. Clinical Pharmacology, Christie Hospital & Holt Radium Institute, Manchester.