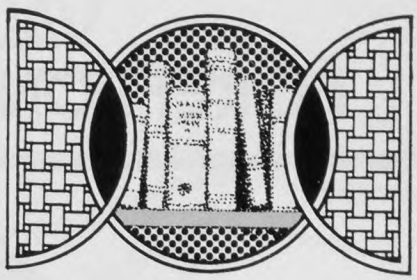
Book Reviews



Medicine. *Mark C. Fishman, Andrew R. Hoffman, Richard D. Klausner, Stanley G. Rockson, Malcolm S. Thaler. J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1981, 500 pp., $19.75 (paper).*

I believe this book satisfies its objective of providing a condensed textbook on medicine, covering the diseases and problems commonly seen in family practice. I particularly like the reference to the underlying pathophysiology in many instances which helps the reader constructively think of his patient's problems. It amounts to a quick reference which would be used by both the resident and active family physician in practice.

It is very easily read and the organization is good. The illustrations and x-rays are appropriate and I believe that it would best serve the practicing physician as well as a resident. I am not sure if it is appropriate for a medical student because it assumes a certain amount of knowledge.

Since I have had the book in my possession I have personally referred to it and received some pertinent information, and it was helpful to me in patient care.

G.S. Mitchell, Jr, MD
Newport News, Virginia

Diagnosis and Management of Diabetes Mellitus: A Clinical Manual for Medical Students, Residents and Primary Care Physicians. *O. Charles Olson. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1981, 294 pp, $19.00 (paper).*

This is a solid medical text and one which is quite practical for the clinician. The strength of the book is the enthusiastic, personal, and humanitarian tone that seems to personify Olson's approach to medicine. While an abundance of "textbook knowledge" is certainly presented, an equal emphasis on the art of medicine is quite refreshing. Patient education, honesty, and the personal touch are repeatedly underscored.

The medical data are clearly presented for easy reading. Controversy is usually acknowledged as such, and various schools of thought are discussed. If there is a criticism of the text, it is the relatively few references cited, particularly when figures and percentages are used. While Olson makes it clear throughout the text that most of the information is founded on his 30 years of diabetology practice, occasionally the anecdotal style leaves some uncertainty in the reader's mind. Overall, this is a

Continued on page 182

Continued from page 179

minor problem easily compensated for by the information presented, the clarity of presentation, and the enthusiasm of the author.

The chapters "Management of the Older Diabetic Patient," "Exercise," "Surgery," and "Home Blood Glucose Monitoring" are particularly good, insightful, and probably worth the price of the text.

An excellent chapter on obesity and its myriad of therapeutic challenges is presented pragmatically as well as theoretically. The chapters entitled "Substitute Sweeteners," "Etiology and Genetics of Diabetes Mellitus," and the "University Group Diabetes Program (UGDP) Study" present a variety of information critical to the family physician not well synthesized elsewhere.

In summary this is a very fine text with a well-structured, clear format. The author's enthusiasm, caring, and touch of humor are bonuses. As an office manual on diabetes mellitus, it belongs in every family physician's library.

James B. Tucker, MD
Upstate Medical Center
Syracuse, New York

Family Medicine and Supportive Interventions: An Epidemiological Approach. *Berton H. Kaplan, Michel A. Ibrahim (eds). Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1981, 71 pp, $4.00 (paper).*

This book contains four papers delivered at a 1977 symposium, "Family and Health." The purpose of the symposium was to address "the relationship of family process

Continued on page 193

Continued from page 182

to health and social support and coping." Two contributors, Ian McWhinney and Jack Medalie, hold impressive family medicine credentials, but neither their writings nor those of the other symposium members seem to address the purpose of the symposium in a cohesive manner.

It was a joy to read McWhinney's scholarly treatment of how physicians accrue knowledge ("objective information and subjective understanding") that pertains to a family's social and behavioral history. McWhinney's honesty is refreshing: "Our (family physician's) information about patients and their families is at best fragmentary. In perhaps 10 percent of families it approaches what we might call completeness." In addition McWhinney notes, "treating the family as the patient—like many ideas transferred from other disciplines—has limited application to family practice."

Of the book's authors, Medalie comes closest to revealing the issues that must be addressed to clarify family health. Not only does he list presenting problems that may be considered cues for family study, but he also outlines strategies for assessment and intervention. Medalie's schema is not, however, utilitarian, but should serve as a springboard for future studies.

The chapter "Adaptation and Health: A Life-Span Perspective" by David and Beatrix Hamburg offers a general model for coping that is worth examining. There is, however, little explanation of how the practitioner can use general coping theory in dealing with problems of family dysfunction seen in the clinic or office. The reader will nevertheless gain an improved understanding of coping strategies by reviewing the ways in which the Hamburgs examine how adolescents and middle-year adults deal with crises.

The final chapter on assertiveness training for adolescents seems to be a "filler." It lacks a sense of belonging to the book's theme. Granted, adolescents do have families, but the role of families in assertiveness training is never made clear.

This book may be of interest to a limited number of researchers in family studies. The lack of cohesiveness in the chapters leads this reader to the impression that not all symposia should be edited into books.

Gabriel Smilkstein, MD
University of Washington
Seattle

Pediatric Drug Handbook. *William E. Benitz, David S. Tatro. Year Book Medical Publishers, Chicago, 1981, 475 pp, price not available.*

This is an excellent book for quick reference on pediatric drug dosages, indications, availability, administration, and toxic side effects. It is well-indexed and divided into chapters based on organ system as well as according to therapeutic indication. The index contains generic as well as brand name drugs for easy cross-referencing. There is also a very good review at the beginning of the book on antidotes for particular problems. The book would have been enhanced by adding treatments for drug overdosages with each drug that is discussed. Despite that oversight, it is an extremely handy book for office practice as well as for residency programs or students.

Linda Stewart, MD
Baton Rouge, Louisiana