of orchestrated symphony of contour-improving surgery as Dr Grazer blends the effects of liposuction with either facelifting, or breast reduction, or abdominoplasty until he reaches a stage where using excisions with lifting and suctioning, he produces a re-vamping of the entire arm, chest and breast in a 'thoroco-bronchiobreastplasty'. He also does wonders in poliomyelitis, Cushing's syndrome and Klippel-Trenaunay-Weber syndrome (which as every schoolboy knows is paediatric lipodystrophy). In all the above Dr Grazer puts down some sacred cows: thus he does not discontinue suction when a particular aspirate becomes bloodstained, he likes to use colloids in the maintenance of normovolaemia and he considers the 'Bermuda triangle' to be a myth. And I agree with him on all these points.

But I do not agree with his new acronym, SAL (for suction-assisted lipectomy). The procedure in question is the suctioning away of fat through a blunt-ended cannula – surely *liposuction* says it all.

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The Management of The Diabetic Foot, Irwin Faris. Pp. viii + 195, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, Tokyo, 1991. Paperback £17.50.

Could this be another pedestrian account of the diabetic foot? Enumeration of well-known aetiological factors leading to better known platitudes about prevention? Fortunately, it is not.

After pausing to establish a historical basis in the first chapter, the text strides confidently through vascular disease, neuropathy, infection and mechanical factors. Microvascular disease is not overlooked, indeed being cited as the cause in up to 30% of cases of failure of healing. The topic of prevention of foot problems is dealt with realistically, and is followed by a description of desirable footwear. A clear and comprehensive account of the clinical features of major lesions leads to discussion of clinical and technical means of assessment of the patient with a foot lesion. The final chapter is solely concerned with management. Clarity of thought and considerable clinical experience is evident, but one aside deserved particular attention: 'Protect the other foot at all times. It may be the only one the patient will have.'

This book stands out from others on the same topic partly because of its sound description of rational management, although the management section does contain one apparent anomaly. Written by a surgeon, the advice on conservative therapy is surprisingly weak. Surely a major point about conservative therapy is that it must be aggressive to be fully effective. This applies to bed rest and also antibiotic policy. There are few other failings of the book. Black and white photographs may be excused in the illustration of gangrene and ischaemia, but colour is surely needed to put over other messages.

Who should buy this book? Anyone concerned with the management of people with diabetes. If you do not buy it, at least read it!

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Annual Review of Public Health, edited by G.S. Omenn. Pp. x + 552, not illustrated. Annual Reviews Inc., California, 1992. Hardback £27.00.

Health gain: these two short words permeate and dominate every aspect of the practice of public health medicine in the UK. I therefore approached the annual review of the American practice of the speciality with great interest: are they as wrapped up in the issue? The short answer is 'Yes'; though individual programmes may differ, the essential thrust is the same as on this side of the Pond.

The aim of the volume is given as bridging academic and service-based public health and preventive medicine. In addressing this, it is divided into six sections: epidemiology and biostatistics; environmental and occupational health; public health practice; behavioural aspects of health; health services; and the public health of ageing.

The aim is clearly met and with success. The book opens with a clear, detailed and weighty review of HIV and AIDs in children and the approach taken sets the tone for the whole book. A central feature of annual reviews is that they must assume each reader will wish to read all topics covered but will not have an in-depth knowledge of every one. As with the rest of the book, this opening section builds up its topic clearly and methodically, starting from the general and moving into more specialist areas.

Of the remainder of the book, I particularly enjoyed three sections. First, the section on the evaluation of health promotion programmes discusses the concept of 'black boxes', arguing cogently for opening them. 'Black boxes' embody the notion that purchasers of health and health care programmes do not need to know what goes on in them, merely that the outcomes are successful and at competitive prices. This discussion is an increasingly important feature of negotiations between purchasers and providers in the NHS. I would recommend the book for this chapter alone. I also liked the section on 'public health assessment', a practical *vade mecum* on the hard indicators that can be used in each major age group and how to deal with small areas and small populations. I would strongly recommend this discussion to anyone serious about needs assessment and health gain. Finally, the chapter on 'social marketing' – the concept of bringing the principles of commercial marketing to the management of health changes in society – was fascinating for its directness and businesslike approach, arguing for health professionals to get in there with the media manipulators.

The great value of this book is that it is above all, interesting. So many annual reviews are rather dry, telling the reader perhaps more about the authors and their research programmes than the subjects covered. This review picks key areas of mainstream interest to anyone involved in public health; it then sets out the major ideas early in each section and argues them through with increasing complexity such that I suggest any reader will find the discussion valuable.

The editors preface the work by saying that this year's layout and approach is something of an experiment. The experiment was an undoubted success and should be repeated. I strongly recommend anyone working in public health to read it.

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