refreshing to find discussions on tests for normality, and reasonable descriptions of more recent confidence limits and poisson distributions. If all clinicians read the chapter on correlation and regression there would be far fewer papers incorrectly correlating, for example, blood glucose [method 1] with blood glucose [method 2].

The only caveat I would mention is that this book is designed for use with computer programmes on statistics, but which one?

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Medical ophthalmology is an art widely understood and practised in Britain but less so in other parts of the world. Britain set these academic standards in the 1960s, when we established an innovative Medical Ophthalmology Unit at St Thomas’ Hospital, London; a vigorous London Medical Ophthalmology Society which meets at various London hospitals every month; and two excellent textbooks of medical ophthalmology.1,2

This admirable new illustrated clinical guide adds lustre to this British tradition of medical ophthalmology and it is strongly recommended as a bedside clinical companion for physicians in all disciplines of medicine. There is an interesting chapter on the interface between ophthalmology and paediatrics; rheumatology; the ear, nose and throat; dermatology; oncology; endocrinology; genitourinary medicine; tropical diseases; haematology; gastroenterology; respiratory disease; and nephrology. Here then is its wide coverage, supported by hundreds of beautiful colour photographs. Where else would one find such an elegant Kayser-Fleischer ring as this one from the Royal Free Hospital?

At the end of the chapter there is a summary of practical points or punch-lines which are recommended for all medical students and paramedical workers in this field. They would also benefit early in their career by learning the techniques of ophthalmoscopy and slit-lamp examination before it is too late. It is difficult to comprehend how the publisher has managed to provide us with such a wealth of colour at such a reasonable price.

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References


In 1965, The World Health Organization established the International Agency for Research on Cancer. This agency’s brief is to conduct a programme of research which concentrates on the epidemiology of cancer and carcinogenesis. Perinatal and multigeneration carcinogenesis is the publication resulting from the symposium in Leningrad in June 1988. This book’s 436 pages reviews model and mechanisms in experimental carcinogenesis and human carcinogenesis. The authors are from many different countries which include Russia, India, West Germany, France, America and Italy. The book’s subject matter ranges from radiation exposure, transplantal exposure to oestrogens and carcinogens and reviews of chemical pathways of carcinogenesis. The Editorial Board’s introduction views this book as representing a multidisciplinary discussion and this discussion; I personally found rather exhausting in its completeness. It is very difficult to establish the audience for this book. Certainly it does not include clinicians nor molecular biologists involved in the study of cancer. I am afraid that this book is of very little interest particularly because of its emphasis upon slightly irrelevant work performed by groups whose presence at the symposium would apparently result from political expediency rather than scientific merit. This is not the volume to buy your favourite medical student relative for Christmas and it is a fine example of medical ephemera without relevance to science.

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The spiralling cost of medical books, whilst a problem for individuals or libraries in the economically affluent countries is a disaster for much of the developing world. Educational facilities in developing countries for those in training and perhaps even more for those who are qualified and working in rural areas are very restricted. Thus there is a desperate need for books and educational materials which are clear, practical and relevant, and above all cheap. The authors aim with this book is to focus on the requirements of the undergraduate medical student and the generalist, presumably those working in the tropics and the sub-tropics as indicated by the title. The book is clearly printed with useful tables and a layout which highlights clinical signs or points in management in relation to particular conditions. However, to be useful such a book must cover the problems the readers are likely to meet accurately and in sufficient detail to be useful. There are a number of places where this reader is somewhat concerned about the reliability of the clinical material presented. One example of this is the Figure relating to the development of measles. In my experience, an incubation period of 12–24 days is unusually long and particularly if then followed by 6 days of illness prior to the appearance of Koplik’s spots and a further 3 days before the appearance of the main measles rash.

The authors state in their preface that they decided not to include neonatology in this book. This would seem to me a mistake since, particularly where doctors do not