

they appeared a year ago. Lifson *et al.*'s account of the epidemiology is historically interesting although it lacks all the recent data from Africa which is beginning to explain the epidemic in females. There is also nothing of substance about the different viruses found in humans and monkeys in Africa. Dr Pinching describes the spectrum of HIV infection and adds a '*cri de coeur*' on how the epidemic should be contained. Surprisingly he does not discuss why AIDS is not a statutorily notifiable disease; to my mind a central issue which seems to have been forgotten. There are some very useful chapters and illustrations on clinical complications, the management of which has not changed significantly over the past year. The chapters on AIDS-related conditions and on the virus itself are a little out of date, underlining the speed with which new information becomes available. The interpretation of antibody tests, the availability of antigen tests and the use of AZT over the past year has changed the way in which clinicians diagnose and treat HIV infection.

This must be one of the first clinical reviews which contains a comprehensive chapter on counselling patients with a chronic disease. I have the uneasy feeling that the complex set of 'rules' involved in counselling must distract the clinician from the main purpose of meticulous treatment of complications, keeping up to date with new antiviral agents, and taking an active interest in containing the epidemic. I think we shall look back with regret at the obsession in the 1980s with protecting people's privacy at all costs.

In summary, this is a well presented book which sets the scene on AIDS in the early 1980s. However, clinicians treating patients with AIDS cannot rely on reviews like this but must keep up with the literature and seek advice from specialist centres.

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**Diseases of the Gut and Pancreas**, edited by J.J. Misiewicz, R.E. Pounder and C.W. Venables. Pp. xvi+1252, illustrated. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Boston, Palo Alto, Melbourne, 1987. £67.50.

This new textbook consists of 12 sections with 78 chapters. Most of the authors are acknowledged experts in their chosen topics; some are less well known, of lecturer or research associate status.

The editors' stated aim is to give a practical account of modern gastroenterology at a postgraduate level, primarily for physicians and surgeons in training. There is some degree of overlap, as is inevitable in a multi-author tome, but this is never obtrusive.

There is an excellent account of the medical treatment of peptic ulcer (157 references) which should be of help to all doctors with a major interest in the stock-market. The sections on the pancreas are sound. Axon refers to gallstone-induced chronic pancreatitis, confirming one's suspicions that modern pancreatologists, having rejected

the Marseilles classification, are not sure what to put in its place. No hepatology is included, apart from a sound chapter on variceal haemorrhage. The accounts of gut ischaemia and irritable bowel syndrome are outstanding. Enteral and parenteral nutrition are well covered, and there is a good chapter on gastrointestinal disease in children by Nelson.

The market for gastroenterology textbooks is now very crowded, but *Diseases of the Gut and Pancreas* should find an important niche. All the major topics in gastroenterology are well discussed. The standard of writing is very high, the style clear and stimulating. This is an important book which can be highly recommended, not only to physicians and surgeons in training, but also to professional gastroenterologists who will find it to be well-illustrated, authoritative and above all, easy to read.

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**Health and Lifestyle Survey**, edited by B.D. Cox *et al.* Pp. 212, illustrated. Health Promotion Research Trust, 1987. £16.

The Health and Lifestyle Survey is necessary reading for everyone concerned with the health of the population and particularly with health education. The survey aimed at examining the relationship of lifestyles, behaviour and circumstances to the physical and mental health of a large representative sample of the British population. Using random selection from electoral registers and with a good response rate, 9003 adults (over 18) were recruited in 1984-5. The information (all schedules are appended) was collected at two home visits and this report presents a brief, very readable text on each area of investigation with supporting tables, figures and references. The sections deal with self-reported health; blood pressure and respiratory function; height, weight and girth; cognitive functions (memory, reasoning) and psychological factors. Within each section the data are analysed by sex, age, socio-economic group, standard geographic region and smoking status. Dietary and exercise (leisure and work) patterns are considered, the latter in relation to the physical measures as well as drinking and smoking behaviour. Smoking information records one-third of subjects who gave up regular smoking, doing so for reasons of ill-health and only 2% because of health education. Alcohol consumption reveals clearly the poorer health status of ex-drinkers particularly in relation to heart trouble, hypertension and stomach trouble. There are excellent sections on 'healthy' behaviour, on beliefs about the causes of health and ill-health and on attitudes to health. The appendices cover methodology, definitions and instrumentation as well as the complete schedules.

This is an extremely useful survey and will provide a baseline for comparison with other surveys as well as an inspiration for more detailed research. The team from the University of Cambridge deserve high praise for the clarity with which the material has been presented. My

personal regret that the work was funded and published by the Health Promotion Research Trust almost seems in poor taste.

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**The Politics of Health Information: 'Beating Heart Disease' as a Case Study in the Production of Health Education Council Publications**, Wendy Farrant and Jill Russell, Bedford Way Papers 28. Pp. 74. University of London Institute of Education, London, 1986. £3.50.

In this publication Wendy Farrant and Jill Russell make a critical study on the way the Health Education Council's *Beating Heart Disease* booklet was produced. In it they broaden their criticism to much current health education which they believe emanates from medical experts blaming people for their risk behaviour and telling them to change their way of living; or as they put it, the top down approach of the victim blaming. Doctors, they believe, prefer this type of didactic education which keeps them in control. Criticising this approach the authors believe that *Beating Heart Disease* neglects the social factor, the chronic social stress which they consider especially important.

I suspect The Health Education Council considered that the object of the campaign was to inform the individual rather than to press for social change. Their publication *The Health Divide* certainly did not fail to stress the importance of poverty and its relation to health.

It is the responsibility of the doctor to advise his patient to live more healthily but also to press for the social change which makes this possible. This stimulating paper certainly challenges the medical approach to health education and should be read widely. I was left wondering whether the sharp fall in coronary mortality in the United States was really due to a reduction of social stress. I

suspect that changes in diet, cigarette consumption and exercise were more important.

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**Scientific Basis of Dermatology: a Physiological Approach**, edited by A.J. Thody and P.S. Friedmann. Pp. x+375, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £40.

I enjoyed reading this book of 375 pages. There are a number of larger textbooks on biochemistry and physiology of the skin, such as the one edited by Goldsmith in 1983 running to two volumes, but none as succinct and as short as this. I regard the book as being a natural successor to an *Introduction to Biology of the Skin* which was published in 1970 devoted to the Proceedings of the annual Biology of the Skin course held in Cambridge. The current book does not deal with every aspect of skin physiology but there are very useful chapters on protection against ultraviolet radiation and immune functions of the skin. I also felt it particularly helpful to have highlighted the succinct features of diseases such as psoriasis, ichthyoses, disorders of connective tissue, acne, disorders of pigmentation, solar radiation-induced disorders, immunological diseases, and disorders of hair and nails. The book contains a number of clear diagrams and a similar number of black and white illustrations which are of adequate quality. The references appear to be up to date.

In brief, I can recommend this book to trainees in dermatology who are relatively new to the subject but it is perhaps rather too detailed for medical students.

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