

informed patients but would be a source of worry and indecision for our less intelligent patients.

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On Call Principles and Protocols, Jean Gillies, Shane Marshall and John Ruedy. Pp xxi + 330. W.B. Saunders Company, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., Sidcup, Kent, 1989. £12.95.

This Canadian hand-book places in order of priority the problems faced on call and suggests questions to ask on the telephone, orders for the nurse, 'elevator thoughts' to pursue on the way to the patient and subsequent selective history, examination, investigations and management.

The aims of this book must therefore seem admirable to the new house officer, who is shown how to deal with the numerous calls about patients falling out of bed, acute shortness of breath, blocked central lines and so on. The authors also discuss the level of urgency of each case and how to manage each situation without involving full history, examinations and investigations.

I certainly found the book useful in offering a structure to use when faced with such problems. It is also very reassuring to be told that many tests *can* wait until the morning and conversely which situations are urgent, deserving immediate attention.

However, I did not find the chapters on patient problems as concise or readable as they should be in a practical hand-book of this nature. Moreover, the details are often inappropriate for British doctors: CT scans are *not* readily available here, and suggested requests to the nurse to insert cannulas and cross-match blood for example, are also inapplicable since British junior doctors perform these roles themselves. Inevitably the drug names also need translation.

Nevertheless, this book does offer a useful approach to on-call problems and as such fills a gap in the education of junior doctors.

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Books Received

AIDS – Principles, Practices and Politics, edited by Inge B. Corless and Mary Pittman-Lindeman. Pp xvii + 252. Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, Washington. A subsidiary of Harper & Row Publishers Inc., Cambridge, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, London, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Singapore, Sydney. 1989. Cloth £58.00.

Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Michael S. Kramer. Pp xii + 286. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, 1989. Price not given.

Rush University Review of Surgery, Steven G. Economou, Steven D. Bines, Daniel J. Deziel and Thomas R. Witt. Pp xviii + 426. W.B. Saunders, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sidcup, Kent. 1988. £16.95.

This book is designed, rather ambitiously, as a revision guide both for medical students and advanced surgical trainees about to undergo higher professional examinations. It was developed by the surgical faculty of Rush University Medical School in Chicago from regular weekly revision sessions with general surgical residents. Throughout the course of a five year residency programme structured reading of two major surgical textbooks (Sabiston's *Textbook of Surgery* and Schwartz's *Principles of Surgery*) resulted in the development of M.C.Q. questions for each 20 pages of text.

The book is divided into chapters corresponding to each textbook and consists of appropriate M.C.Q. questions, with not only the answers but also comments following each question. The most important aspects of the book are the comments which attempt to amplify the correct answers and explain away the incorrect ones. In this regard the book succeeds in providing a comprehensive revision exercise for the two textbooks concerned. Although the two texts may not be the most popular for UK surgical trainees nevertheless the questions, answers and comments provide a most useful basis for structural revision and should enhance an individuals ability to cope with tricky M.C.Q. questions. On reviewing the individual chapters and questions I was impressed by the clarity of the comments and by a lack of disagreement with most of the answers provided.

I am sure this book will find more favour during the building up to F.R.C.S. examinations rather than with undergraduates although with 426 pages of revision provided for £16.95 both groups may benefit.

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Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary, 24th Edition. Abridged from *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary*. Pp xviii + 668. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, London, Toronto, Montreal, Sydney, Tokyo. 1989. £12.50.

Family Medicine: Principles and Practice, 3rd Edition, edited by Robert B. Taylor. Associate Editors: John L. Buckingham, E.P. Donatelle, Thomas A. Johnson, Jr. and Joseph E. Scherger. Pp xxxviii + 743. Springer-Verlag, New York, Berlin, Heidelberg, London, Paris, Tokyo, 1989. Price not given.