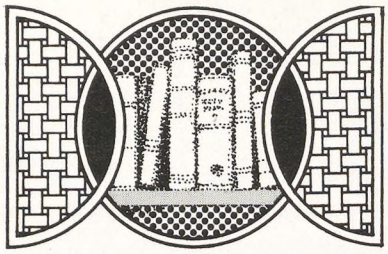
Book Reviews



Review of Medical Pharmacology (6th Edition). *Frederick G. Meyers, Ernest Jawetz, Alan Goldfien. Lange-Medical Publications, Los Altos, Calif, 1978, 762 pp., $14.50 (paper).*

Review of Medical Pharmacology is a text written for the student and clinician. Although therapeutic uses of drugs are discussed, this is not a therapeutics text but a general pharmacology reference, and the authors suggest consulting the package insert before prescribing new or unfamiliar drugs.

This book is well organized and easy to read. The first seven chapters review general information including pharmacokinetics, clinical evaluation, drug administration, drug abuse, and adverse drug reactions. The remainder of the book is comprised of chapters of drug groups according to their pharmacologic class. Each chapter is a review of a pharmacologic class with respect to chemical structure, kinetics, metabolism, pharmacology, side effects, clinical uses, contraindications, dosages, and preparations. The authors admit that the sections discussing available preparations may be inaccurate and recommend that a physician check with his pharmacist regarding available dosage forms and strengths. Although individual statements are not referenced in the text, a list of references, which usually emphasize the clinical aspects of the drugs, are presented at the end of each chapter. The authors were careful to list only references from major journals or books. In the appendix, a 17-page table of the common effects of drugs on laboratory tests is useful, while a table of drugs hazardous in pregnancy is too brief to be of value. A desirable feature of the index is that drugs are listed both according to their generic and common trade names.

For those practitioners desiring a pharmacology text less comprehensive, easier to read, and more clinically oriented than Goodman and Gillman's *Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics, Review of Medical Pharmacology* would be an appropriate choice. The list price of only $14.50 also makes this paperback book attractive.

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Shands' Handbook of Orthopaedic Surgery (9th Edition). *H. Robert Brashear, Jr, R. Beverly Raney, Sr. C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1978, 548 pp., $21.50.*

Shands' Handbook of Orthopaedic Surgery was first published 41 years ago and now appears in its ninth edition. It is undoubtedly a tried and true friend for many physicians and allied health care professionals.

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This handbook does not deal with the treatment of fractures or dislocations but addresses itself to most of the other aspects of orthopedics. The text is well written and pertinent. The material is organized well, so that problems and related conditions are easily located. The numerous photographs and illustrations are of exceptional quality. An unusual and most helpful feature is an excellent bibliography indexed to chapter and subject matter.

This is a "handbook" and not a definitive work. Therefore, one must be content without all subjects covered in detail. Current common problems such as those encountered by joggers or runners—for example, plantar fasciitis— are not covered.

This book will serve many of the needs of practicing family physicians, family practice residents, medical students, and allied health care professionals. It will be most appreciated by old friends who have used this text in the past and have become accustomed to its emphasis and style.

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Clinical Psychiatry in Primary Care. *Steven L. Dubovsky, Michael P. Weissberg. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1978, 220 pp., $10.95 (paper).*

This small and useful book in paperback format of 220 pages is divided into nine chapters. Each chapter is structured in the same fashion. There is a general description of the subject of the chapter, such as Chapter 1, "Hypochondriasis," with a simple list of clues to the diagnosis. Next, a description of an encounter with a typical patient, followed by the physician's reaction to this patient. Then, a discussion follows of common unsuccessful approaches, with the patient's response and the reasons the approaches were unsuccessful. Finally, a discussion is presented of successful approaches with the patient's response and why these are more apt to be successful. Each chapter has a discussion of the limitations for the family physician and the point at which consultation or referral to a psychiatrist is advisable. There is a description of specific differential diagnoses and further description of specific drug therapy for the problem being discussed.

The nine chapters are on (1) Hypochondriasis, (2) Depression, (3) Organic Brain Syndromes, (which I found extremely interesting and which gave me a far better understanding of the diagnosis of this problem), (4) Substance Abuse, (5) Sexual Dysfunction, which I would rate as only fair in its discussion, (6) Reactions to Illness, (7) Family Problems, (8) Schizophrenia, and (9) Psychiatric Emergencies.

This is a well organized and useful small book. It is specific and has practical suggestions for the psychiatric problems that primary physicians see and care for frequently.

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Family Practice (2nd edition). *Robert E. Rakel, Howard F. Conn (eds). W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1978, 1,186 pp., $38.50, $44.30 (Canada).*

This book is the definitive text on family practice. Its uses are multiple. For the practitioner, it can serve as a handy reference for almost any problem arising in office practice. For the student, it can function magnificently as a survey course presenting the essential elements of the basic specialties involved in family practice. For the specialty trained primary physician, it opens up the whole world of behavioral health and of continuing comprehensive patient care in family and community settings.

Let there be no misunderstanding. No single volume textbook can compete with the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, much less compress the world literature in medicine between its covers. Don't sell *Family Practice* short however. Much of its material is presented in outline, or even tabular form. Pearls can be found in almost every chapter. Its relevance to clinical family practice has been assured by the unique marriage of an academic specialist to a veteran family physician-teacher as co-authors of most chapters. The result is trenchant, readable, understandable prose that makes for pleasurable browsing or practical reviewing.

In organization, the text moves from a global picture of health care delivery through the principles of primary care to the specifics of clinical problems. The behavioral sciences are particularly well presented, with graphic descriptions of most components as applied to the care of families. The chapters on the more traditional specialties are also tightly written. In all cases, the extensive bibliographies provided offer references to the definitive literature for the serious student or the clinician with a complex problem.

By and large, the book uses illustrations well, and employs tables and charts to compress ideas into graphic form. It is surprising that the chapter on cardiology uses no ECGs to illustrate the text, and astounding that the text is silent on the subject of myocardial infarction. Management of the menopause might also deserve attention, as might human growth and development in Pediatrics. Room could be made for these topics because some duplication exists. For example, breast examinations are covered in Surgery and in Gynecology; GI bleeding in Surgery and in Gastroenterology; and asthma in Chest Diseases and in Allergy and Immunology.

That this volume is in its second edition is a tribute to its quality and utility. That it has improved with age is a testimonial to its editors and authors. Their careful work has made substantial contributions to both family practice and primary care.

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Family and Marital Therapy: A Transactional Approach. *James E. Lantz. Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1978, 215 pp., $9.75 (paper).*

The author of this volume states his hope that it will serve as a theoretical framework and practi-

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cal guide for the beginning family therapist. As an introductory text it has numerous shortcomings which reduce its utility.

Lantz labels his theoretical approach "transactional," meaning that individual disturbance can be best understood as resulting from repetitive dysfunctional transactions or patterns of communication. The therapist's task is to reshape those transactional processes within the family. This is hardly a new insight; Lantz borrows liberally from prior work. The result is neither a new synthesis nor a clarifying restatement, but a hodgepodge of concepts, jargon, and techniques from very different sources forced uncomfortably together. The beginner in this field would do much better to go directly to the very readable primary sources, eg, Virginia Satir, Jay Haley, and Eric Berne.

The author's presentation of technique similarly lacks cohesion. Various intervention strategies are briefly presented at different points in the book, often with very little elaboration on how to use them or what to expect when they are introduced into a family therapy session. Lantz states that his book should not be used to replace competent professional supervision, but "how to" books are inevitably used in precisely that manner. The neophyte therapist "trying out" these techniques is likely to wind up in situations with which he or she is ill prepared to deal. A section of particular interest to family physicians, on decreasing somatic and physician complaints, is so lacking in detail as to be of almost no assistance to the clinician looking for direction in this vital area.

This book is not likely to be of much use to the necessarily pragmatic family physician. The style of intervention required more allocation of time than most primary care physicians are able to make, and this is a far less than ideal primer in any case.

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Obstetric Emergencies (2nd edition). *Denis Cavanagh, Ralph E. Woods, Timothy C. F. O'Connor. Harper & Row Publishers, Hagerstown, Md, 1978, 437 pp., $19.50.*

This book is written in the style of the shorter British text revealing the origins of two of its authors who have attempted to provide rapidly available guidance to those of us who have the misfortune to deal with obstetric emergencies. They point out that "there is little time for thought and often only the prompt and appropriate intervention of an alert doctor or nurse averts catastrophe."

The book is intensely practical. The first section likely to be consulted is the index, which is clearly laid out, allowing easy access to the information in the book. Terms such as "toxemia" and "eclampsia" are indexed with page numbers, avoiding the annoying necessity to thumb through the index.

The chapters are brief, logically laid out, and nicely subdivided. The subheadings are easily identified, and the information is presented in succinct form, often as a "laundry list" of steps. Illustrations, where they are used, are line drawings but all are clear and adequate for the purpose intended.

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The authors make extensive use of diagrams and tables, which seem to be appropriately chosen to support the text. There are occasional photographs or x-rays throughout the book and these are well reproduced, particularly taking into account the modest cost of the book.

This volume achieves its objective extremely well. It presents a great deal of information in a highly concentrated but easily retrievable form. It is comprehensive, up-to-date, and intensely practical. In short, it is a very good, handy reference manual for the family physician who practices obstetrics, for the family practice or obstetric resident, for the medical student, or obstetric nurse. It succeeds admirably in its purpose and I shall guard my copy jealously.

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Immediate Care of the Sick and Injured Child. *Shiv K. Dube (ed); Sophie H. Pierog (assoc ed). CV Mosby Company, St. Louis, Missouri, 1978, 384 pp., $17.50 (paper).*

"The entrance of a pediatric patient and his parents into an emergency room is the final stage of a process in which the child and parents have been engaged....In bringing the child to an emergency room, the parents are acknowledging their own inability and failure to meet the child's needs" (page 6). This sensitive insight sets the opening tone of a guide to pediatric urgencies and emergencies that is technically valuable, and occasionally family oriented. I only wish that the family orientation were maintained throughout the book. The technical value of this book does not rest on any claim to be the latest and most thorough update of pediatric emergencies. On the contrary, the book is simple—sometimes to an extreme, but exceptionally well organized and readable. The first major section presents common problems; the second, surgical and medical emergencies; and the third section is an appendix of childhood laboratory values, drug dosages, and procedures.

In the first section, the authors deal with common, but urgent problems of sick children. Seventeen common problems, such as vomiting, diarrhea, noisy breathing, and fever are discussed clearly under headings of etiology, work-up, and management. Potentially serious signs and symptoms are put under a diagnostic alert heading at the beginning of each chapter, and serve as a guide for emergency admissions. In the etiology section, most chapters present boxed areas of common and uncommon causes for each of the problems. While the work-up is divided into the typical history, physical examination, and laboratory investigations that appear overly simplified and "cookbookish," the management section presents concise operations for ambulatory as well as initial inpatient therapy.

I found the second section on medical management and surgical emergencies useful, with some important topics packed with a wealth of insights and data, but marred by minor inconsistencies that I wish were not part of a manual otherwise so sensitive to behavioral management. For instance, the

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