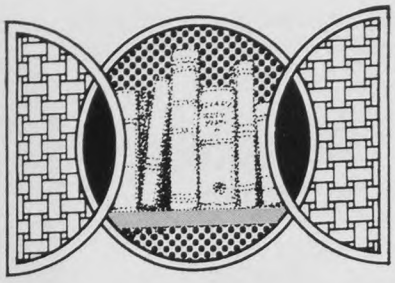
Book Reviews



Orthopaedics in Primary Care. *Chinni Pennathur Ramamurti; Richard Vernon Tinker (ed). Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 1979, 385 pp., $36.00.*

The contents of *Orthopaedics in Primary Care* is very relevant to family physicians. In the introduction the editor explains the juxtaposition of the specialties of family practice and orthopaedics, and there is also a discussion of the importance and characteristics of orthopaedics in primary care.

The text is very readable and is organized in a regional anatomical approach which is advantageous to anyone dealing with typical injuries. I appreciated the explanation of the functional anatomy in each region. The general principles of treatment of injuries in a particular region are listed helping one to understand the treatment to be undertaken. There is special emphasis on physical therapy and rehabilitation techniques, and these are very well illustrated. Photographs of x-ray films are not used, but important x-ray findings are clearly described and illustrated.

The author has clearly worked extensively with family physicians, and the editor, Dr. Richard Tinker, being a family physician, has maintained that emphasis. This book will be very useful for the family physician, particularly in the early years of practice, the family practice resident, medical students, and allied health practitioners in primary care.

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Primary Care of Hand Injuries. *William L. Newmeyer. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1979, 279 pp., 215 illustrations, $22.50.*

Attributing improvement in the quality of care of hand injuries to the growth of primary care specialties, Dr. Newmeyer has based this book on the format of a continuing medical education course for family physicians and Emergency Room physicians. The author has described a number of techniques and treatment methods which he has found to be successful in his clinical experience. The book is not meant to be a reference text, but it should well serve the primary care physician for whom it is intended. Residents and medical students should also find much valuable information in the book.

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The first five chapters of the book are devoted to a discussion of the basic elements of hand care with which the physician must be familiar in order to properly treat specific hand problems. This section includes a review of the functional anatomy of the hand, important steps leading to correct diagnosis and management of hand injuries, appropriate tools and equipment, dressing the injured hand and, in a short chapter, a potpourri of topics including principles of anesthesia, antibiotics, and hand incisions.

The application of these basic elements to specific problems is discussed in the second section and major portion of the book. Included are chapters on lacerations, injuries to finger pads and nail bed, infections, tendon injuries, bone and joint injuries, burns, complex injuries (defined as serious injury to one tissue system in addition to the skin or extensive loss of skin), nerve injuries, and amputations.

One of the author's objectives is to assist the primary care physician in distinguishing between those problems which can be treated and those which should be referred. Realizing that the criteria for making this decision may vary according to one's practice location, the author is successful in providing the physician useful information.

Practical advice, such as that found in the discussion of foreign bodies quoted below, is liberally sprinkled throughout the text.

The biggest error made in searching for foreign bodies is unrealistic persistence. Before commencing the search . . . the patient should be warned that a limited search will be conducted and if no foreign body is found, the search will be terminated. The search should last ten minutes.

Discussion pertaining to the examination of the hand is particularly well done and informative. The section describing techniques used in testing for nerve damage is also excellent.

The 215 illustrations are of good quality and contribute significantly to the narrative. Photographs are well used to illustrate techniques and to demonstrate abnormal vs normal physical findings.

The author made one statement with which I take minor exception, to the effect that warts should be referred to a dermatologist. Most family physicians, I am sure, would disagree.

For the most part I think this is an excellent book and achieves the purposes intended by the author. I think physicians, residents, or students who would like to learn more about the primary care of hand injuries would find it worthwhile reading.

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Managing Health Care Delivery: A Training Program for Primary Care Physicians. *Mark S. Plovnick, Ronald E. Fry, Irwin M. Rubin. Ballinger Publishing Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978, 130 pp., $15.00 (paper).*

This is a manual of teaching materials for helping physicians in both primary care or family practice residency programs, and practice situations, acquire management skills. It is designed to provide physicians with the skills necessary for day-to-day management of health workers delivering care.

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This book is quite readable and is organized into six teaching sessions: factors influencing the coordination of care; managing goal conflicts; managing role conflicts; allocating decision making responsibility; organization structure and design; and managing the change process. Each session is accompanied by a set of instructions and guidelines that should enable the session leader to "stage manage" the session. Each of the six sessions is divided into objectives, session description, suggested reading, a session activities outline which divides up each two-hour session, options for conducting the session, and a four- to six-page introductory reading section. Sample problems are given for members of the group to solve. Finally, each session concludes with a small group task and a total group discussion guide. The session leader should either be familiar or become familiar with this technique to facilitate the sessions. The aforementioned contents are advantages of this type of manual, but they become disadvantages if one chooses to use the manual primarily as a textbook.

Despite the fact that the manual was field tested at three residency programs, it was the reviewer's opinion that it would take a fairly sophisticated resident to appreciate it and to be willing to invest the several hours required for the workshops. Yet the manual is of substantial relevance to family practice residents, family physicians, and program directors. In addition to its applicability for residency programs, other health care provider organizations and departments of family practice could use one or more sessions as a focus for faculty retreats. The manual is not intended as a reference for individual residents or physicians but would be a worthwhile addition to the libraries of residency programs and other health care organizations. Although this book is organized as a work manual, this reader found it informative and enjoyable reading without actually implementing the study sessions.

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Stress. *Tom Cox. University Park Press, Baltimore, 1978, 200 pp., $12.95 (paper).*

The notion that stress has an impact on human physical well being is by no means new, and there is a great deal of current "pop psychology" about that relationship. A spate of paperbacks on stress and its management have flooded the bookstores, and they typically offer little to the professional reader. This book is an outstanding exception to this general rule. A work of sophisticated scholarship, this brief volume brings together the current medical and psychological knowledge about stress and draws out a consistent theoretical point of view about the nature of the phenomenon and its relationship to health.

Many of the authors in this area have tended to grossly oversimplify the complex physiology and psychology of stress. Cox, a psychologist, addresses these issues in their complexity, with a well-organized and highly readable style. Few of us are expert in all areas, and Cox presents difficult concepts

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in a manner which permits the non-expert reader to follow the author's line of discourse with relative ease. The book is not for the unsophisticated reader, and is probably beyond most lay audiences, but seems appropriate for medical students, physicians, and allied health professionals. The work draws upon the resources of many disciplines, and hence permits a broad overview. In this way it is likely to be a useful text, both for the students and for professionals seeking to expand their general knowledge in this area.

The weakest area in the book is its brief and rather superficial treatment of the various interventions available for dealing with stress related problems. The author clearly acknowledges this shortcoming. Nonetheless, the framework provided for considering the possible interventions is excellent, and is likely to be of much use to the practicing physician, who typically has other resources available for details on implementing specific treatment strategies.

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Manual of Clinical Problems in Pediatrics. *Kenneth B. Roberts (ed). Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1979, 416 pp., $10.95 (paper).*

Dr. Kenneth Roberts and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins have written a manual designed mainly for medical students and others who want a brief overview of 100 clinical problems in pediatrics (from respiratory failure and status asthmaticus to child abuse). It does not deal with the specifics of treatment, but it does have an extended and current bibliography for each clinical problem. This bibliography is well annotated and guides the readers to specific questions they might have about any aspect of each clinical problem.

For details of any specific problem in pediatrics most family physicians would find a standard textbook of pediatrics more useful. However, if they want a highly readable, practical, brief overview of a clinical problem with an extended and excellent bibliography, this manual would be an appropriate addition to their library.

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Joint Disease: All the Arthropies (3rd Edition). *E. C. Huskisson, F. Dudley Hart. Year Book Medical Publishers, Chicago, 1978, 158 pp., $14.95.*

As stated precisely by the authors in the introduction, this is not a textbook and is not intended for casual reading. It is prepared for consultation and is to assist the physician in making the correct diagnosis of an arthropathy. It also offers suggestions concerning the most recent forms and types of therapy. Every conceivable joint disease and joint disorder is presented in this book, for it is the contention of the authors that to make a correct diagnosis the rarest as well as the commonest must be considered.

The first 17 pages are devoted to preparing the reader for full and ef-

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ficient use of the book. Here one finds a Classification of the Arthropies, Causes of Joint Pain, the Incidence of Arthropies, Joint Puncture and Examination of Synovial Fluid, Drugs Used for Rheumatic Diseases, Abbreviations and Rheumatological Jargon, and a brief general discussion of Back Pain.

Each of the arthropies is then presented in an organized and exact fashion that makes this a valuable quick reference book. Incidence, Joints Affected, Symptoms, Signs, Course, Associated Features, X-Ray Findings, Laboratory Findings, and Treatment are given in that order for each disease or ailment. Information presented is clear and concise. No redundant material is included to reduce the value of this book as a quick reference or consultation source. References for further reading are provided should the physician find this necessary.

This is a most useful book for the family physician and general internist who see many patients with joint complaints. For the more complicated and involved cases, a more detailed text would be necessary.

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Aging: Its Complex Management. *Ronald Cape. Harper & Row, Medical Publishers, Hagerstown, Maryland, 1978, 229 pp., $14.50.*

This small book is divided into two major sections. I found the first section interesting and informative but the second difficult and less helpful. The first section is an extensive discussion of the anatomic and physiologic changes of aging. For example, lean body mass consists of muscle, liver, brain, and kidneys. This total weight diminishes 20 to 30 percent by the age of 70 to 80. This tissue is replaced with less actively metabolic tissue: fat. The result of these changes is, of necessity, decreased physiologic function of all the organ systems. This may be measured in decreased kidney function, decreased gastrointestinal function, decreased glucose tolerance, and other physiologic parameters. This first section leads into a short discussion of biologic gerontology, or the study of aging. One theorist on aging, F. M. Burnett, is quoted as proposing three major factors in aging:

1. There are genetic limitations to the number of generations of somatic cell proliferation.
2. Somatic mutations occur and increase with age, resulting in altered and less effective cell function.
3. The older the organism, the less effective its immune responses.

The second general section of the book deals with the five major problems of the aging patient: (1) confusion; (2) falling; (3) incontinence; (4) homeostatic impairment; and (5) iatrogenic disorders.

This section contains case histories of aging patients with the various problems described. It is somewhat anecdotal and filled with personal case histories. The treatment methods suggested are not especially novel or helpful.

In summary, I found this book useful in understanding the physiology of aging but not particularly helpful in the management of the problems of the aged.

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