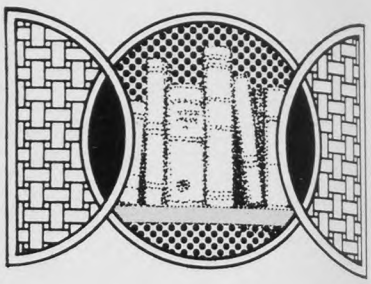
Book Reviews



A Primer of Clinical Diagnosis (2nd Edition). *William B. Buckingham, Marshall Sparbere, Martin Brandfonbrener. Harper & Row Medical Publishers, Hagerstown, Maryland, 1979, 350 pp., $17.95 (paper).*

A Primer of Clinical Diagnosis is written that the first and second year medical student may learn the fundamentals of clinical medicine. This book emphasizes techniques of physical diagnosis as well as the implications of clinical diagnosis. This text is written for the student who has only scant background in physiology and pathology. It was developed and written principally for students at the authors' medical school which begins its course, "Introduction to Patients and Clinical Medicine" before students complete the study of physiology and pathology. This curricular strategy now appears to be the trend in many medical schools, enhancing the applicability of this text.

Initial attention focusing on the communication and relationship process is refreshing and very well done. I take some semantic exception to the title of Chapter Four, "Observation of the Patient as a Unit." It might be more humane to say "observation of the complete patient." "Unit" to me indicates the designed assemblage of mechanical parts such as one encounters in an automobile dealer's lot or showroom.

Cognitive facts are presented in this text in a well-organized and concentrated fashion. The medical student will want to have a textbook of anatomy and physiology within arm's reach to gain a true understanding of its contents, thereby avoiding total reliance on memorization.

The examination of the cardiovascular systems is extremely detailed and precise (68 pages). This chapter could serve as an excellent review for senior medical students, residents, and practitioners. A review of the physiology of the cardiovascular system is recommended concurrently or prior to reading this chapter.

The last two chapters "Making the Medical Record" and "Achieving a Diagnosis" are welcome additions to textbooks of this type.

The text generally does not contain as many diagrams or color photographs as some other texts and consequently is less expensive. Its size, soft cover, and cost is certainly an advantage for the student who rarely refers to this type of text after completing the junior year of medical training.

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