

Geneeskunde sowel as die SA tak van die International Academy of Pathology.

Vele studente sal hom onthou vir sy deeglikheid en kenmerkende presiesheid. Veral nagraadse studente het hom geken as 'n leermeester wat aangedring het op hoë standaarde maar waarin hy self die voorbeeld gestel het. Sy humanitêre lewensbeskouing het nie verskille in klasse of kleur geken nie.

Hy word oorleef deur drie kinders, Gisela, Ingrid en Detlef en vyf kleinkinders uit sy eerste huwelik met Erika wat hom etlike jare reeds ontval het. Ons betuig ons meegevoel met sy gesin en veral met sy eggenote Margaret (nee Mitchel) wat hom in sy laaste jare en siekte so liefdevol versorg het.

Books

Side Effects of Drugs. Annual 17: 1993

By J. K. Aronson and C. J. Van Boxtel. Pp. xxii + 563. Amsterdam: Elsevier Science. 1994. ISBN 0-444-82005-1.

The *Side Effects of Drugs Annual* has been published annually since 1977. This edition reports on adverse drug reaction reports from July 1992 to December 1993. There is no question that it is achieving its stated goal of 'providing a critical and up-to-date account of new information relating to adverse drug reactions and interactions, from the clinician's point of view'.

However, the evidence-based approach, which is increasingly being adopted, would add tremendous value to this publication. Systematic reviews of the literature with rating of reported randomised controlled trials, cohort and case-control studies, according to acceptable criteria and with formal meta-analyses, will provide the clinical reader with interpreter information on which to base his/her pharmacotherapeutic benefit/risk decisions.

The scope of the publication is broad and one is puzzled that such an important publication has not yet been organised according to the ATC-classification, using the INN drug names.

The introductory essay to this edition eloquently states that 'those who have taken up the cause of drug safety have not done badly in thirty years and with a little scenario planning, may even do better. The mists of tomorrow will never quite recede, but the playing field is becoming tolerably clear.'

This is all very true, but the annual *Side Effects of Drugs* publication should not be seen as more than signal-describing, albeit the best available signals on which informed decisions regarding appropriate use of medicines can be made.

The playing field will really come out of the mists once an evidence-based approach is adopted.

Laubi Walters

* Book titles marked may be ordered directly from MASA Publications, Book Department, Private Bag X1, Pinelands, 7430, tel. (021) 531-3081, fax (021) 531-4126, e-mail masact@aztec.co.za.

ABC of Sexually Transmitted Diseases*

3rd Edition. Edited by Michael W. Adler. Pp. 71. Illustrated. £15. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1995. ISBN 0-7279-0889-8.

The ABC of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, written by acknowledged experts from the University College London Medical School, is a concise and well-illustrated book covering the major sexually transmitted disease syndromes such as urethral and vaginal discharges and genital ulceration/infestations, and the specific causes thereof. Syphilis, AIDS, viral hepatitis and the all important topic of methods of control are also discussed.

Although many books are available on this important subject, this particular book, which is now in its third edition, is a particularly useful addition in that it provides a simple, well-illustrated, practical guide to the diagnosis and management of common sexually transmitted diseases. It makes for easy reading, is up to date and the text is well complemented with concise summaries in the form of numerous tables. The therapeutic regimens recommended in this book, however, are of particular relevance to practitioners in the United Kingdom. In addition, sexually transmitted diseases such as chancroid, granuloma inguinale and lymphogranuloma venereum which are common in parts of Southern Africa are not adequately covered. This book should prove particularly useful to undergraduate and non-genitourinary postgraduate students, as well as general practitioners, nurses and other health care workers who are involved in the care of patients with sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. It represents good value for money.

Y. Coovadia

Introduction to Minimal Access Surgery*

Edited by T. H. Brown and M. H. Irving. Pp. 85. Illustrated. £32. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1995. ISBN 0-7279-0885-5.

This excellent small book is aimed at surgical registrars, general practitioners and medical students. I believe that it will be particularly valuable to surgical trainees. It gives GPs some background knowledge but perhaps contains more information than they require. The book could also possibly be of benefit to senior medical students.

The book is well written and very well illustrated. The operative colour photographs are excellent as are the diagrams. The book provides a very good summary and succinct overview of the current role of minimal access surgery in both general surgery and in the surgical subspecialties. Introductory chapters cover equipment, techniques and training. Well-illustrated chapters deal with cholecystectomy, hernias, appendicectomy, upper GI disorders, colorectal disease and gynaecology. In addition, urology, thoracic surgery, ENT surgery and orthopaedics are covered. The reviewer would particularly recommend the book as essential reading to surgical trainees as they approach examinations. The book is not detailed enough for specialists in the individual subspecialty areas where there are many texts available today.

Although at £32 the book may appear expensive for trainees when this is converted into South African Rands, it will certainly be a worthwhile investment.

J. Terblanche

ABC of Brainstem Death*

2nd Edition. By C. Pallis and D. H. Harley. Pp. 52. Illustrated. £13. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-0245-8.

In 1993 a series of articles appeared in the *British Medical Journal*. These were written in the ABC format by Dr Christopher Pallis, of the Royal Postgraduate School of London. This first series concentrated on the more practical aspects of diagnosing brainstem death.

In the early 1980's the cultural implications of brainstem death were largely unexplored. Today the criteria must be widely accepted in a multicultural society. In this new 1995 updated version by C. A. Pallis and D. H. Harley, an anaesthetist involved in intensive care from Chesterfield, a new chapter is specially devoted to the brainstem dead person seen as a potential organ donor. Reference is also made to the persistent vegetative state and the role of

custom (rather than reason) in some of what is still practised and advocated.

The book is clear, easy to read and is extremely practical and down to earth.

The book admirably fulfils its 3 objectives:

- To equate death of the brain with death.
- To suggest that death of the brainstem is the necessary and sufficient component of brain death.
- To explain how a dead brainstem can reliably be diagnosed at the bedside.

The book is soft covered, A4 size, and reasonably priced at £13.

It will be extremely useful to have in any ward, casualty or intensive care unit. Students, nursing staff and all types of doctors from the community health or family practitioner to neurologists and neurosurgeons will benefit from this book.

V. U. Fritz

Drug alert

Deadline for breast implant and all other claims

In terms of Dow Corning Corporation's court-approved notification programme, all potential claimants of the company living outside the USA must file their claim by 14 February 1997. All non-implant claimants must file by 15 January 1997.

Filing a claim does not necessarily entitle a claimant to compensation, and failure to file by the deadline will mean that individuals will no longer be entitled to compensation for any claims now existing or ever arising in the future involving breast or other implant.

For more information: Foreign Claims Information Centre, PO Box 7500, Midland, MI 48641-7500, USA, tel. (091-402) 445-9273, World Wide Web site <http://www.implantclaims.com>.

Notices

Maurice Weinbren Award in Radiology

The Maurice Weinbren award in Radiology is offered annually by the Council of the College of Medicine of South Africa for a paper of sufficient merit dealing with radiodiagnosis, radiotherapy, nuclear medicine or diagnostic ultrasound. The closing date is 15 February 1997.

The guidelines pertaining to the award can be obtained from: The Executive Secretary, Mrs Bernice Bothma, 17 Milner Road, Rondebosch, 7700, tel. (021) 689-3161, fax (021) 685-3766, e-mail cmsa-adm@iafrica.com.

Books received

The receipt of these books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits. The SAMJ does not publish unsolicited reviews.

ABC of Medical Computing.* By Nicholas Lee and Andres Millman. Pp. vii + 93. Illustrated. £20. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1996. ISBN 0-780727 910462.

Neonatal Formulary.* Compiled by The Northern Neonatal Network. Pp. xxviii + 199. £19.95. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-1030-2.

Cancer and the Adolescent.* Edited by Peter Selby and Clifford Bailey. Pp. xii + 298. Illustrated. £32.95. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-0893-6.

What to do in a Paediatric Emergency.* Ian Higginson, David Montgomery and Phil Munro. Pp. 48. £14.95. London: BMJ Publishing Group. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-1032-9.

Nursing Practice.* WHO Technical Report Series No. 860. Report of a WHO Expert Committee. Pp. iv + 33. SwFr12/US\$10.80. Geneva: WHO. 1996. ISBN 92-4-1120860-0.

Integration of Health Care Delivery.* WHO Technical Report Series No. 861. Report of a WHO Study Group. Pp. v + 68. SwFr14/US\$12.60. Geneva: WHO. 1996. ISBN 92-4-120861-9.

Metabolic Consequences of Changing Dietary Patterns. Volume 79 World Review Of Nutrition and Dietetics. Edited by A. P. Simopoulos. Pp. xv + 226. SwFr254/DM304/US\$221. Basel: Karger. 1996. ISBN 3-8055-6296-9.

Climate Change and Human Health.* Edited by A. J. McMichael, A. Haines, R. Slooff and S. Kovats. Pp. xvi + 305. SwFr30/US\$27. Geneva: WHO. 1996.

TB/HIV. A Clinical Manual.* By Anthony D. Harries and Dermot Maher. Pp. 135. SwFr12/US\$10.80. Geneva: WHO. 1996.