

GENERAL PRACTICE LITERATURE

NEW BOOKS

FAMILY PRACTICE: PRE-TEST SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

R. J. O. Catlin

McGraw-Hill
Connecticut (1981)

242 pages. Price £21.75

This American book contains 730 multiple choice questions with answers and explanations. There are 16 separate sections, for example on cardiology, endocrinology, surgery, psychiatry and psychology, family aspects of medicine, medical ethics and paediatrics. There are 14 contributors, each one having been responsible for one section, with a few contributors responsible for two. The book is extremely well referenced and anyone wanting to read more about a topic can do so.

A great deal of effort has obviously gone into preparing this book but I am

afraid it has little relevance to those of us working in the UK. Candidates preparing for the MRCGP examination would only be confused by the format of the questions.

T. S. MURRAY

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TRAUMA AND AFTER

R. Porter, J. Price, R. Read (Eds)

Pitman Medical
London (1981)

122 pages. Price £4.95

If I were to pick a common theme from the contributions to this report of the Fifth Ciba Foundation Medical Student Conference, it would be that the practice of medicine is always full of hope. Although the topics covered include some of the more grisly aspects of medicine, such as adolescent suicide or battlefield casualties, at no time are we left with the feeling that little can be done, and even contributors from high-technology medicine emphasize its human side.

As befits a symposium run by and for medical students, the book identifies gaps in the medical curriculum such as effective first-aid teaching and occupational therapy, and makes a plea for their incorporation.

It contains many interesting facts, such as the comparatively slight effect of outside rather than local help in such major world disasters as earthquakes, and the fairly small health risk of medical exposure to ionizing radiation. In other words this book puts many aspects of trauma and its sequelae into perspective. Two general practitioners make contributions: Eric Wilkes on grief reaction and Christopher Evans on stroke rehabilitation. These, and indeed all the articles, would make excellent topics in teaching trainees and the book can be recommended to all general practitioners who want to refresh themselves on the physical and psychological sequelae of trauma.

A. D. CLIFT

General Practitioner
Manchester

CASSETTE TAPES

SOUND SLIMMING SENSE (33 MIN), TENSIONS, FEARS AND PHOBIAS (40 MIN)

Sound Health Services, 10
Westacre Gardens, Stetchford,
Birmingham B33 8RF

Both retail at £3.49, but available
direct from publishers at £2.45 to
medical organizations and GPs

The spoken word is a difficult medium

to use effectively without the relief of a visual image. The content of these two audio tapes was unexceptionable, but I would be reluctant to recommend them to any of my patients because, for this listener, the accent, tone and cadence of the anonymous doctor who presents the subject was consistently soporific.

Paradoxically, the only section that aroused me was that on relaxation, which is unfortunately buried in the middle of the second side of the tape on tensions, fears and phobias. A standard technique which can be used at home is presented. Provided the listener does not become too frustrated trying to find the start of the exercise and provided he or she can maintain the rather rapid pace at

which the presenter sets them, this could indeed be of use to some patients.

In practice both the obese and those with tensions, fears and phobias gain most benefit from individually tailored programmes. This need is not met by tapes which attempt to be comprehensive. Perhaps we should be suggesting that our patients bring us blank tapes and that we then record individual programmes which can complement any other treatment they may be receiving.

C. K. DRINKWATER

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HEINEMANN

New for trainee and practising GPs:

GENERAL PRACTICE (Tutorials in Postgraduate Medicine Series)

Edited by Eric Gambrill

Provides the basis for group discussions on selected topics in General Practice. Each chapter deals with the state of the art in a particular area and then poses questions and raises problems as starting points for discussion.

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