Classic Teachings in Clinical Cardiology: A Tribute to W. Proctor Harvey, Volumes 1 and 2. *Edited by Michael A. Chizner. 1526 pp., illustrated. Cedar Grove, NJ, Laennec Publishing, 1996. $145. ISBN 1-886128-06-5.*

For this two-volume text, Dr. Chizner managed to recruit 53 distinguished cardiologists to write 12 parts encompassing 62 chapters covering the entire field of cardiology. All the authors were at one time either fellows or students of Dr. Harvey's during his tenure as Director of Cardiology at Georgetown University School of Medicine. Dr. Harvey's cardiac pearls, quoted in bold print throughout the 1526 pages, serve to highlight key elements of the subject matter in each chapter. Part 1, which makes up one third of the text with 510 pages, is devoted to Dr. Harvey's five-finger approach to the clinical evaluation of the cardiac patient. These five components include (1) history, (2) physical examination, (3) electrocardiogram, (4) chest x-ray examination, and (5) the cardiac diagnostic laboratory, which includes echocardiography, exercise testing, nuclear studies, cardiac catheterization, and clinical electrophysiology.

Although some clinicians might find the redundancy of some subject material, as well as Dr. Harvey's often-repeated cardiac pearls, bothersome, a rehearsal of the clinical evaluation of certain important cardiac disorders from a variety of perspectives is an effective means of learning. Highly informative chapters particularly relevant to the family or primary care physician address hypertension, endocarditis, clinical correlations, the clinical anatomy of the heart, pathophysiologic mechanisms of heart disease, clinical recognition and management of cardiac arrhythmias, a clinical approach to the patient with palpitations, syncope, and sudden death, clinical recognition of rheumatic heart disease, mitral valve prolapse syndrome, a clinical approach to hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and congenital heart disease, as well as heart disease in the elderly, heart disease in women, cardiovascular evaluation of the athlete, and evaluation and management of heart disease in patients undergoing noncardiac surgery.

The section on coronary heart disease is thorough and rich with clinical applications in the evaluation and management of stable and unstable angina pectoris and acute myocardial infarction. I was disappointed that the chapter on lifestyle modification and prevention of coronary heart disease did not include the latest information regarding folic acid or homocysteine metabolism. Nonetheless, the author provides a superb discussion on the prevention of atherosclerosis with up-to-date important information on exercise and nutrition, especially the effects of alcohol consumption on coronary heart disease.

These two volumes are well illustrated with color photographs and useful tables printed on high-quality semiglossy paper. There were a few nuisances, however. The noticeable spelling errors in a treatise of this quality were distinctly out of place. Abbreviations that were not explained or spelled out were also annoying, though infrequent. One example was the use of BHAT in the chapter on acute myocardial infarction. The index spells it out as the Beta.Blocker Heart Attack Trial and accurately refers to it on the page in that chapter. In a different chapter, however ("The Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease"), a different author uses the same initials without explanation in the subheading describing antioxidants. I did not know what BHAT stood for in this context, nor was there an explanation for BHA or BHT referred to as synthetic antioxidants. Finally, I was disappointed that the index was available only in Volume 2; moreover, it was printed in different type with larger letters and too much space between the lines. I will admit these were minor nuisances.

In summary, this publication is a magnificent contribution to clinical practice and to teaching cardiology to medical students, residents, and all physicians involved in caring for patients who have heart disease or who are at risk for heart disease. I recommend this two-volume text for anyone involved in teaching or in the practice of family medicine or other primary care disciplines.

Nikitas J. Zervanos, MD
Lancaster General Hospital
Lancaster, Pa

Medicine and the Internet. *By Luis G. Pareras. 653 pp. Boston, Little, Brown, 1996. $39.95 (paper). ISBN 0-316-69059-7.*

Interest in the Internet has exploded during the last several years, with the number of users at approximately 35 million. By the turn of the century, experts estimate this number will surpass 100 million. Why are so many people on-line? Is it worth the effort for a family physician to learn how to use the Internet? How can a family practice clinic benefit from this resource? In one of the few medical texts devoted exclusively to the Internet, the author answers these questions thoroughly. Both beginners and experienced Internet users will benefit from the exhaustive detail found in Dr. Pareras' book.

The first section of this book addresses the history and growth of the Internet as it pertains to medicine. The author, a physician who has specialized in medical informatics, succinctly describes the original and still-dominant purpose of the Internet: if you have information of interest, share it with everybody else. After giving an overview of the basic Internet tools, he describes current and potential medical applications. The author's vision of how the Internet can benefit health care professionals is enlightening and backed up by real-life examples. This thoughtful discussion is required reading for Internet developers.