

with many clinical case examples and liberal use of charts and tables. Not only do chapters have references for further reading, but some list books to recommend to parents and patients as well. One editor, Dr Levine, a recognized authority on learning disorders, has contributed three chapters on this subject in which he describes the many different entities lumped under this heading and provides detailed guides for helping students with the various conditions.

The editors state a dual mission of providing a definitive reference work for subspecialists in developmental-behavioral pediatrics and a guide to generalists who want to foster optimal behavioral adjustment and development in all children. They seem to have amply succeeded. The additions to this third edition include an update on pharmacology and new sections on emergencies, motor coordination weaknesses, and so-called "unpopular" children. For any clinician who deals with the developmental and behavioral problems of children, this reference is most helpful.

Leland J. Davis, MD
Santa Rosa, Calif

Conn's Current Therapy 1999: Latest Approved Methods of Treatment for the Practicing Physician. Edited by Robert E. Rakel. 1340 pp, illustrated. Philadelphia, WB Saunders, 1999. \$59 (paper). ISBN 0-7216-7224-8.

This 51st edition, true to its predecessors, is an excellent resource for any provider. Eighty-five percent of the chapters in this edition are written by new authors, and 15% of the chapters have been updated from the last edition. New topics include cat-scratch disease, cystic fibrosis, trypanosomiasis, and inflammatory bowel disease. Once again, this text accomplishes its intent to "focus on problems frequently encountered in practice and those less common conditions that could have serious consequences. . ." and to provide "up-to-date information on recent advances in medicine in a concise. . . manner."

This edition maintains the successful format implemented in previous editions. The book is divided into 18 sections: 10 on organ systems, 1 on a symptom-oriented approach, 2 on infectious diseases, and 1 each devoted to obstetrics and gynecology (including neonatal resuscitation and care of the high-risk neonate), allergy, psychiatric disorders, and physical and chemical injuries. There are 295 chapters, and the reader can still depend on thorough yet concise coverage of all the topics. Each chapter contains readily accessible and easy-to-use quick-reference tables or algorithms that contain valuable information the busy practitioner can use without wasting valuable time reading through the extraneous content common in other textbooks. The layout of the index is well thought out and user friendly. In addition, the appendix has an exhaustive yet helpful section on normal laboratory values.

I have a few criticisms with this edition. Every chapter lacks references for the evidence-based data the authors use to validate their approach. The editor encourages the

reader "to compare the treatments presented in previous editions. . ." with the treatment approaches presented in the present edition "to see how different experts manage the same problem." Unfortunately, this pursuit can lead to treatment strategy bias. The editor has included "full institutional affiliation of each contributor. . . if additional information or follow-up is needed" by the reader. Such an approach could dishearten those readers who are looking for a more evidence-based approach to evaluation and treatment.

Second, the section on skin and nail disorders is still lacking graphics. This section could be strengthened by the addition of photographs (black and white, or color plates) to enhance the readers' recognition of these conditions.

Lastly, I wonder whether it is possible for one text to "be all" for every discipline in medicine. I believe that most of the chapters on medicine do meet this expectation, but some fall short and are weak. This failing is most evident with the obstetrics section.

Despite these shortcomings, I must admit that I continue to love this reference text and would recommend it to busy practitioners who want the answers to their questions at their fingertips. This is the book I would want if I were stranded on a deserted island (and still had to practice medicine!). No medical library should be without it.

David Acosta, MD
Tacoma Family Medicine
Tacoma, Wash

AIDS Therapy. By Raphael Dolin, Henry Masur, and Michael Saag. 884 pp. Philadelphia, Churchill Livingstone, 1999. \$150. ISBN 0-443-07592-1.

The rapid evolution of therapies for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) make the writing of a textbook on these topics a formidable task. It is a certainty that any book will be out of date before it can be published simply because the publishing process takes a long time. *AIDS Therapy*, succeeds, however, because of its format and the quality of its contributors. The contributors are clearly expert and primary investigators in the areas about which they are writing.

Antiretroviral therapy is well covered by an authoritative chapter on each currently approved antiretroviral medication. The section on antiretroviral treatment strategy suffers somewhat from the rapid evolution of practice, lacking for instance the latest data on the value of resistance testing, but it remains an excellent review of the fundamental theories driving current approaches. The sections on specific opportunistic processes and approaches to clinical syndromes are of high quality and include well-designed and useful algorithms. The editors have paid special attention to the pharmacologic aspects of the treatment of HIV infection, including strong sections on drug administration and serious interactions of both antiretroviral drugs and other AIDS-related medications.

The most conspicuous shortcomings result from new information. Studies regarding the usefulness of resis-