

For those teachers, like myself, who missed the book first time around, it is a valuable asset. All family practice trainees and residents and medical students trying to decide on career choices would benefit from reading it. While US family physicians make fewer home visits and their systems of care differ, the patient problems are the same and the messages are fully appropriate.

Brian K. Hennen, MD  
University of Western Ontario  
London

**Ramamurti's Orthopaedics in Primary Care. Second edition.** Edited by Gerald G. Steinberg, Carlton M. Akins, and Daniel T. Baram. 390 pp., illustrated. Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins, 1992. \$60. ISBN 0-683-07928-X.

Although up to 25 percent of primary care patients have musculoskeletal complaints, few texts sufficiently deal with orthopedic problems in this setting. The editors of *Ramamurti's Orthopaedics in Primary Care* recognized this lack and set out to write a text that can be easily referenced by emergency or primary care physicians. Each chapter is organized into a basic format: (1) a review of the anatomy, (2) the physical examination, and (3) a discussion of common disorders of the particular region. By plan, the editors exclusively used authors with subspecialty expertise; their stated intent was to provide appropriate discussion at the primary care level while at the same time to define clearly when the need for referral exists.

The organization throughout the book is consistent with the basic format, and although the writing is generally dry, it is always readable. Anatomy is described in detail in most chapters, and good line drawings help supplement the discussion. In a few areas radiographic displays are also provided to supplement the chapter discussion.

Unfortunately, and perhaps because of their choice of authors, the editors have produced a text that will not appeal to most of their target audience. Numerous studies have indicated that 80 to 90 percent of orthopedic diagnoses are suggested by an orthopedic-oriented history even before examination. This text contains minimal discussion of the best methods for approaching the orthopedic history and offers few "clinical pearls" about important historical points. Although the editors intended to discuss the common problems seen in primary care, a number of the chapters show little insight into the type of conditions that are seen in family practice offices. I see no reference to the primary care literature, which indicates that individual authors did not try to familiarize themselves with the actual conditions seen by practicing physicians.

The chapter entitled Orthopaedic Problems in the Pediatric Patient illustrates the difficulty of trying to

make a brief but comprehensive text. This chapter is only 5 pages long, and even though pediatric problems are mentioned in other parts of the book, this rendering remains too superficial to serve as a useful reference. No editor could produce a text that adequately covers all the types of problems seen in primary care in less than 400 pages.

The editors are correct in stating that few texts of adequate scope and depth deal with orthopedic problems in primary care. This text, however, also falls short of the editors' own standards. A number of recent sports medicine textbooks do a better job of covering primary care orthopedics and would be more useful to practicing family physicians. This textbook might serve as a good initial introduction to primary care orthopedics for physician extenders and medical students. Subsequent editions would be strengthened substantially by review of the practice content of primary care. In addition, widening the authorship to include physicians who have an active practice in primary care orthopedics would help the editors produce a text that would better serve their target audience.

Karl B. Fields, MD  
The Moses H. Cone Family Practice Center  
Greensboro, NC

**Saunders Review of Family Practice.** By Edward T. Bope, Alva R. Cass, and Michael D. Hagen. 329 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 1992. \$42. ISBN 0-7216-3222-X.

The three authors of this book have done a nice job of capturing the essence of the work of the many contributing authors of Robert Rakel's *Textbook of Family Practice*, 4th edition. This interesting and useful review book uses a question-and-answer format to cover the content of the textbook. In addition, each entry includes a critique explaining why the answer is correct or incorrect, thus adding greatly to the educational value.

This handy-sized book can provide a much needed review for physicians studying for board recertification. The questions follow the format for questions used in a substantial portion of the board examination.

This book also has relevance for anyone wishing a quick review to keep up to date in a particular area of practice and will be particularly helpful for those who learn best by being able to quiz themselves on their knowledge of a subject area.

The book is logically organized and follows the chapter headings in the *Textbook of Family Practice*. The large section on clinical practice covers everything that the family physician encounters in practice — infectious disease including the ambulatory management of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), otolaryngology, obstetrics, office gynecology, emergency and sports medicine, interpreting laboratory tests, and 34 other clinical areas. In addition,

there are sections on the family, community medicine, and communication skills. I was pleased that such areas as child abuse and sexual assault, care of the dying patient, and ethics have been included. Also periodic health examination and prevention, home care, nutrition, and interpreting medical journal literature are important areas to review and might inspire one to turn to the textbook itself for more in-depth coverage.

There are few illustrations in the format of this book, but they are not needed to meet the goals of this review. A number of electrocardiographic trac-

ings are included. I believe all family physicians will find this book of use for a quick review of any area of family practice. Perhaps this review is the answer to those of us who have been looking for a more effective way to review for board recertification. It will also be useful for residents and medical students, either as a study guide or for self testing.

Jack Leverage, MD  
University of Washington  
School of Medicine  
Seattle