Book Reviews

**Physiology, 3rd Edition.** Edited by Robert M. Berne and Matthew N. Levy. St. Louis, Mosby-Year Book, Inc., 1993. 1,100 pp., 963 illus., $59.95.

*Physiology, 3rd Edition* is a classically good textbook. Lucid, well written, and easy to use, this edition makes a perfect companion to a physiology course. Designed on the principles of the 2nd edition to emphasize broad concepts of physiology, the 3rd edition has been revised to make the text as accurate, current and clear as possible. The section on renal, respiratory and central nervous systems have been entirely re-written by new authors. Miscellaneous facts have been eliminated. A large number of illustrations and a summary at the end of each chapter have been added to highlight key points.

The book is organized into nine sections, each written by an authority(s) on the respective topic. The first section provides a foundation for understanding physiological function by providing detailed analysis of the important physicochemical principles. The remaining sections are organized by organ system. Each chapter within a section is divided into major topics with an introduction of the concepts to be explained in the subsequent subdivisions. Concepts are presented clearly, using tables, illustrations and practical examples for reinforcement.

The format makes this a good reference book as well as an easy to follow text book. The index is extensive with a list of diverse secondary titles for general entries. The graphic techniques used to delineate major topics, subsequent subdivisions and new terms makes finding specific information easy by thumbing through an individual chapter.

Berne and Levy wrote the section on the cardiovascular system. The text is nearly identical to their well-received monograph which is priced at $26.95. Thus, for anyone inclined to buy two or more monographs for a physiology course, Berne and Levy’s *Physiology, 3rd Edition* at $59.95 makes sense economically as well as academically.

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**Color Atlas of Human Dissection, 2nd Edition.** By C.C. Chumbley and R.T. Hutchings. St. Louis, Mosby-Year Book, Inc., 1992. 199 pp. $29.95.

As long as gross human anatomy is an integral part of medical education, there will be a need for books to guide the student through the task. This book is intended specifically for the medical student, and is reasonably successful at providing a structured approach to human dissection.

The book is divided into seven sections: Thorax, Abdomen, Pelvis and Perineum, Lower Limb, the Back, Upper Limb, and Head and Neck. Each of these is divided into a series of logical dissections. Each dissection is assigned its own page or set of pages in which the procedure is unambiguously laid out. The authors have been
thoughtful in realizing that for each student doing the actual dissection, several students will be required to know about it, identify the major structures, and understand the topographic and physiologic relationships. Each subsection is superbly designed for this purpose. There are clear directions for performing the operation, and separate boxes highlighting the things every student should observe and identify. A single sentence articulates the purposes of each dissection, providing an excellent broad outline of the most important points.

The physical structure of the book has been well thought out, and other publishers of texts for this market should take note. The spiral binding might be less than archival quality and may not look great on a shelf, but it allows the book to be opened flat, even with gloved hands. The pages may be folded back so that in labs where space to open a book is limited, this text can be left open. The covers are made of a tough coated paper likely to survive a year of exposure to preservative chemicals.

As the authors acknowledge in their preface, however, this book is not meant to be used alone. It is inadequate as an atlas of anatomy. Each dissection has only a few illustrations, most of which are unlabeled. This is fine for orienting the student, but of marginal help in identification of small or ambiguous structures. Normal and pathologic variations are rarely mentioned, so these may cause considerable confusion when found by the student. Relationships between dissections are not described well, so that anatomical overviews are difficult to figure out. Learning the various arteries originating on the aorta, for example, would require reference to many different pages and pictures.

Neither is this an effective textbook of anatomy. Functional relationships and physiological concepts are rarely mentioned. Important vestigial remnants of embryologic organization are not noted at all. There are no clinical correlations which would be helpful and inspiring to the medical student.

These omissions are by design. The authors have kept the book limited to the most essential details of the dissection to be done. For a student provided with an outline or lab manual which spells out the things she or he is expected to learn from each dissection, however, this book must be used in the lab together with at least an anatomical atlas—perhaps with both an atlas and a textbook. It is hard to imagine the simultaneous use of several large books not proving cumbersome, however. For the medical student who is not given a lot of direction in the lab, and especially for the student who is not provided with an outline or lab manual which spells out the things she or he is expected to learn from each dissection, this book is an excellent choice, and fulfills an essential need.

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THE DEMENTIAS: CROSSROADS BETWEEN NEUROLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY. By M. Girgis and K. Harris. St. Louis, Warren H. Green, Inc., 1992, 187 pp. $27.50 Paperbound.

"The average human life expectancy has increased markedly since the turn of this century . . . unmasking a new epidemic: dementia." This epidemic, dementia, is the focus of the book The Dementias: Crossroads between Neurology and Psychiatry, by Girgis and Harris, both of the University of Sydney, Australia. This book provides a