



The Turnstone

A Doctor's Story. By Geoffrey Dean. Pp. xi. +273. Illustrated. Liverpool University Press. 2002. ISBN 0-85323-767-0.

Geoffrey Dean was born in Wales in 1918. His lifestory is one of a varied and remarkable medical career and fascinating reflections by an astute observer.

Geoffrey practised as a physician in Port Elizabeth for 20 years and there achieved international recognition for his studies on porphyria, multiple sclerosis and lung cancer, despite being so far from the nearest medical school.

He retired in 1985 as director of the Medico-Social Research Board in Ireland, where he engaged in a variety of epidemiological studies of medico-social problems around the world. He remains active in research and travel.

There are fascinating accounts of enabling and destructive experiences at schools; the horrors of WWII when he served as a medical officer in Bomber Command; brushes with the apartheid authorities (and with the *SAMJ!*) as a result of his medical observations concerning prisoners and political influences in Cyprus. He also reflects on other personal aspects of his life - marriages, religious beliefs, tragedies and ageing.

Like his historical hero, Thomas More, Geoffrey Dean has lived life as 'a man for all seasons'.

JP de V van Niekerk

Mosby's Medical, Nursing and Allied Health Dictionary

Sixth Edition. Chief Lexicographer: Douglas Anderson. Lexicographers: Jeff Keith, Patricia Novak. UK Edition. Pp xxvi +2134. + A-43. Illustrated. Mosby Inc. Oct 2001. ISBN 0-723-43225-2.

For anyone whose business is words, perusing a new dictionary is an exciting occasion, and so it was with this one. Once I had seen what I needed, I felt almost as replete as after a satisfying meal.

There is a complete alphabetical list of all illustrations on the contents page. A comprehensive atlas of the human body follows, and while it is no *Gray's Anatomy*, its contents are most useful and the illustrations are of almost Netter-like quality.

The next section, a guide to the dictionary, provides hints and explanations that will make the use of this volume much more efficient and it is essential reading.

The explanations and definitions in the dictionary portion are easy to read and understand. If a condition such as croup, mumps or hydrocephalus is discussed, after the definition (which contains clinical and epidemiological detail as well)

there are sections labelled observations (signs and symptoms), interventions (treatment considerations), and nursing considerations (aspects such as required bed rest, notifications to authorities and other items such as immunisation). The very pleasing illustrations in the dictionary section consist of line drawings, photographs and photomicrographs.

There appears to be a little of the 'spelling schizophrenia' characterised (or characterized) by the use of both US and UK spelling. Even though this edition is labelled 'UK edition, British spelling', they use both in many cases. They offer, for example, 'conization' and 'travelers' diarrhea', but also include 'haemophilia' - although they refer users to 'hemophilia' for the full definition.

The alphabetical list however has many terms not found in other medical dictionaries, such as 'self-destructive behavior' (note American spelling) but it does not have 'vulnerary' (pertaining to wounds).

The dictionary further contains 20 appendices (only appearing in the UK edition) ranging from conversion tables to abbreviations and acronyms. In the 'tabular atlas of human anatomy and physiology', there are definitions of cells, muscles, bones and other structures. For example, the parietal bones are described as being in the skull, numbering two, and defined as 'prominent, bulging bones behind the frontal bone; [they] form top sides of cranial cavity.'

Other appendices contain drug names and interactions, normal reference values (in conventional and SI units) and much more. There is also a very useful section titled 'Medical Terminology' giving the meanings of many prefixes and suffixes e.g. rhabdo- (rod-shaped) in rhabdomyoma, or -malacia (softening) as in osteomalacia. You will even find the American sign language alphabet. There is also a comprehensive list describing the purpose, procedures and the expected outcomes of hundreds of clinical tests.

This is a well-produced book on good quality paper and with good colour registration. As it is aimed at a range of health professionals, the language is kept to a level of technicality commensurate with the abilities of the target audience, but at the same time, it maintains accuracy and does not 'talk down' to anyone. I consider it a valuable and useful addition to anyone's medical library.

Fred N Sanders

Books Received

Dementia: Fast Facts. Indispensable Guides to Clinical Practice. By LWhalley and J Breitner. Pp. 103. Illustrated. £12. Health Press Limited. 2002. ISBN 1-8995-4178-0

Evidence-Based Cardiology. Second edition. (Plus CD-ROM). Edited by S Yusuf, J Cairns, AJ Camm, E Fallen and B Gersh. Pp. xxiii + 968. £90. BMJ Books. ISBN 0-7229-1699-8.