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Book reviews

Gametes — The Oocyte

Once again these experienced and capable editors have brought together an informative and stunningly comprehensive text which this time singles out the oocyte as the focus of attention. A clinician is humbled by the narrowness of his knowledge as he reads how cellular and genetic mechanisms have evolved around the development of one single cell to which is entrusted the faithful continuation of the species and yet the ability to change and adapt in a competitive environment. Each chapter is a self-contained discussion on aspects of evolution, molecular developments, cytoskeletal organisation, genetics, paracrinosology or endocrinology, but they all progress logically from molecules to disease and finish with the customary ethical debate. Fancy colour pictures are abandoned in favour of black and white illustrations which are clear and useful and all that is necessary for the arguments to be followed. The more clinical chapters are written with a refreshing clarity, not so much from the aspect of treating a disease state, but of understanding the physiology and cellular and molecular biology. This is a better way of learning as it allows the student to understand and to question rather than repeat customised responses to set clinical situations.

We might ask what part in a busy specialist registrar’s crowded 5-year time table this book should take. It needs to be squeezed in somewhere, not so much for the huge quantity of data which are presented on every page but more for the general principles which the data are used to illustrate. A truly thought provoking book for all those interested in reproduction.

Stephen Killick

P11 S0301-2115(96)02477-3

Drug Therapy in Reproductive Endocrinology
Jean Ginsburg (Editor)

What the scalpel means for surgeons, means drug therapy for reproductive endocrinologists. Therefore, it is important news that a new book has been published on this rapidly changing specialism.

The purpose of this book is to provide a source of practical information on the diagnosis and management of reproductive problems. The 28 authors (endocrinologists, gynaecologists, paediatricians, urologists and radiotherapists) are all (British) authorities in their field. By stringent editing Jean Ginsburg has succeeded in making a complete book with little overlap and a uniform lay-out.

A variety of clinical problems has been reviewed in this book, including hirsutism, menopause, contraception, induction of ovulation et cetera. Not only drug therapy but also pathophysiology, clinical presentation and diagnosis are discussed on a concise way. The content of most chapters is of a high quality. It is pity that there are hardly any direct references; however, each chapter ends with approximately 10 suggestions for further reading. A unique feature of the book is the last chapter, a pharmacopoeia of all drugs discussed, describing mode of action, kinetics, (contra-)indications, dosage and adverse effects.

This complete and well-written work is a practical book and should be advised to all clinicians and trainees in both gynaecology and endocrinology.

Jan A.M. Kremer
Nijmegen, The Netherlands

P11 S0301-2115(96)02489-X

Infectious Diseases of the Female Genital Tract
Richard L. Sweet, Ronald S. Gibbs (Editors) Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, MD, 1995; 792 pp.; ISBN 0 683 08040 7

Infections continue to play a prominent role in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. Indeed, infections are challenging to general gynecologists, perinatologists, as well as to oncologists. The goal of the editors was to provide physicians with the diagnostic and therapeutic knowledge required to reduce the significant morbidity and prevent the occasional mortality resulting from in-