



patient taking amiodarone should alert the examiner to the presence of pulmonary fibrosis, a very serious complication of amiodarone. Similarly, one of the tables indicates that pericarditis is caused by hydralazine and procainamide or anticoagulants. However, this statement is only valid if the patient presents with the side effect of lupus-like syndrome (or an underlying pericarditis made worse by anticoagulants causing bleeding into the pericardial sack). To imply that these drugs have the same cause of pericarditis as renal failure or viral infections is misleading.

The early use of transthoracic echocardiography could have been stressed in the explanation of the underlying mechanisms in a patient with chest pain, with hypertension or cardiogenic shock, or with suspected pericardial tamponade or pulmonary embolism. The use of short-acting nifedipine in the treatment of hypertension is also a dubious recommendation.

Overall, this book does contain useful information. The final critics, 1st-year residents who have read it, state that it is good.

**T. Edward Cuddy, MD**  
Acting Section Head  
University of Manitoba  
Section of Cardiology – EKG  
Health Sciences Centre  
Winnipeg, Man.

## The Children of Neverland: The Silent Human Disaster

Gideon Koren. 153 pp. The Kid In Us Publications, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto. 1997. \$20. ISBN 0-9681801-0-8

**Overall rating:** Very good  
**Strengths:** Breadth of topics; compelling writing style  
**Weaknesses:** Lack of detail about any one subject, need for more careful editing

**Audience:** Anyone professionally or personally interested in the welfare of children

Thousands of children born each year will never reach their full potential, trapped for life in "Neverland." In Koren's words, the book is a "human manifesto . . . not a scientific document" and on that level it succeeds.

Using anecdotes, case histories and statistics suitable for the lay reader, Koren describes the many threats to children, arguing that most of these threats are preventable and therefore doubly tragic. Individual chapters address environmental exposures, embryological toxins, medical interventions, poverty, war and ethnic conflict, teenage pregnancy, suicide, poisoning and politics. He cautions us, however, not to draw premature conclusions about risks. He advocates more research involving children as being essential to the prevention of unnecessary abortions and to the improvement of our prevention strategies. He challenges our assumptions about children's ability to make informed decisions, persuasively contrasting them against the major responsibilities we give babysitters.

The strengths of the book are its breadth and Koren's caring, compelling style of writing. Breadth, however, is also the book's principal weakness; the book lacks the detail needed to be a reference for any of the topics. A professional editing might make the text flow more smoothly. Also, it is difficult to evaluate some of the author's statements because of the limited bibliography. For example, given the extensive sex education now in elementary and high schools, at least in Ontario, I am left wondering if more education is really the solution to the high teenage pregnancy rate.

Who would benefit from reading this book? It should be of specific interest to educators and parents on

school councils, health planners, health sciences students and people registering for pregnancy and birthing classes. It may be of particular value as a course book for senior elementary or early high school health classes. Any of us involved in the care of children, however, can afford to be reminded from time to time that while the lives of children are more secure than they were in Charles Dickens' time, there is still much to do.

**Michael L. Marrin, MD**  
Department of Pediatrics  
McMaster University  
Hamilton, Ont.

## Management of Injuries in Children

John F.T. Glasgow, H. Kerr Graham. 440 pp. Illustrated. BMJ Publishing Group. 1997. Distributed in Canada by the CMA. \$102.95 (\$85.95, members). ISBN 0-7279-0925-8

**Overall rating:** Good  
**Strengths:** Reads well; many useful clinical pearls  
**Weaknesses:** Some imbalance in coverage of topics; algorithms would be useful  
**Audience:** Emergency physicians, pediatricians, family physicians who work in the emergency department; others who care for injured children

Physicians who provide acute care to injured children are the intended audience for this book. Written by John Glasgow and H.K. Graham from Sheffield and Ulster respectively, the book has a distinctly British flair. (For instance, the authors show a preference for diazepam for acute management of seizures, as opposed to lorazepam.) The same comment applies to syntax; some North Americans might stumble over terms such as paracetamol and pethidine.



This book is distinctly different from other texts on the subject, which at times resemble expanded "how-to" manuals. It is more philosophical in tone; much of the text reflects the considerable experience of the authors in the prevention and treatment of childhood injury. Chapters include epidemiology of childhood injury, child abuse and how to prepare medicolegal reports.

One strength is the authors' thoughtful consideration of many basic issues critical to the management of injury among children. There is in-depth discussion of how adults and children differ, including developmental issues that are key determinants of the injury patterns among children.

The text could benefit from algorithms, such as the initial management of children who have sustained major trauma. There is much emphasis on orthopedics, while other topics, such as blunt abdominal trauma, are considered in less depth. Although the importance of analgesia is described, there is fairly minimal coverage of the available options, especially regional blocks, which are increasingly being used for analgesia of children in the emergency department.

Overall the book reads very well, and I enjoyed making my way through it. There are many useful clinical pearls; colour illustrations add to the easy flow, notably with respect to issues such as the aging of bruises and unique patterns of soft tissue injury; and tables are clear and concise. This text would be useful for trainees in emergency medicine, pediatrics and family medicine, notably for explaining how probable injury patterns, produced by equivalent patterns, will differ in children and adults.

**Michael Rieder, MD**

Children's Hospital of Western Ontario  
London, Ont.

## Know Smoking: The Whole Truth About Smoking and Quitting

Simon T. Bryant. 220 pp. Illust. Middle Way Publishing, Calgary. 1997. \$16.95. ISBN 0-9681456-0-4

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|------------------------|---|
| <b>Overall rating:</b> | Good to excellent   |
| <b>Strengths:</b>      | Novel-like style; minimum "preachiness"   |
| <b>Weaknesses:</b>     | Over simplification of "solution"   |
| <b>Audience:</b>       | Smokers and their families, physicians, medical students, residents, nurses, school counsellors, social workers |

Bryant's exceptional smoking cessation book approaches this health and life-saving issue in a unique "info-novelette" form. He uses humour and amusing cartoons (created by Vance Rodewalt) to good effect. The author has obviously given the world of smoking and the smoker a great deal of thought. The intensity of the addiction, difficulty in stopping and techniques for doing so are clearly outlined. While presenting the facts in a manner digestible even to an unmotivated heavy smoker, the book generally avoids the preachiness found in most volumes of the genre. The book's greatest strength is its logical approach to the "psychology" of quitting.

However, Bryant oversimplifies (i.e., raise the taxes on cigarettes) the solution to the problem of how to inhibit our youth from starting to smoke and, in this regard, fails to maintain objectivity. When higher taxes did briefly raise the price of cigarettes, Canadian cigarette factories produced and sold as much as ever — "for export" — and smuggling and other tobacco-related criminal activities were widespread (shades of prohibition!). There was no scientific evidence of reduced tobacco consumption during this period, only a reduction in sales that could be monitored.

The greatest weakness of the book is the author's failure to address the

youth issue with the same intensity as he applies to the question of getting adults to quit. Perhaps we should all shift our focus in that direction, while keeping in mind that eliminating tobacco smoking may turn out to obey the "law of unintended consequences." (Youth under stress or looking for peer bonding may take up other equally or more harmful behaviours!)

All in all, however, the book should assist patients and health care workers to "know smoking" and help some very motivated (or less motivated) smokers to quit. It would be interesting to evaluate the usefulness of this book in a smoking cessation program versus no book or another book that addresses a similar audience.

**Michael T. Newhouse, MD**

Clinical Professor of Medicine  
McMaster University  
Director  
Barnett Medical Aerosol Research  
Laboratory  
St. Joseph's Hospital  
Hamilton, Ont.

## Books and other media received

### *Livres et autres documents reçus*

#### **Anatomy**

**Anatomy: Palpation and Surface Markings.** 2nd ed. Derek Field. 215 pp. Illust. Butterworth-Heinemann. 1997. US\$42.50. ISBN 0-7506-3143-0

#### **Books for patients**

**Good Health Online: A Wellness Guide for Every Canadian.** Jim Carroll, Rick Broadhead. 182 pp. Illust. Prentice Hall. 1997. \$16.95. ISBN 0-13-776428-6

**Living Well With Epilepsy.** 2nd ed. Robert J. Gumnit. 249 pp. Demos Vermande. 1997. US\$19.95. ISBN 1-999799-11-0