Book reviews

Daniels, V.G.: AIDS – The acquired immune deficiency syndrome. MTP Press Limited, Lancaster, 1987. 188 pages.

The AIDS epidemic remains a phenomenon of unusual importance, evidenced through a plethora of medical data and publications. In the foreword, the author claims to provide a comprehensive overview of *all* aspects of the disease. In ten chapters the spread of the epidemic throughout the world, risk groups, modes of transmission, HIV tests, clinical signs and symptoms, and treatment options are all reviewed and explained, so that they are intelligible to everyone. Several appendices provide guidance to the various issues surrounding the disease, including a glossary, selected bibliography, a list of UK hemophilia reference centers, BTS and AIDS/HIV support groups. Although the author frequently cites several studies with conflicting results, the lack of an appraisal of these contradictory issues complicates the readability of some passages. The description of PGL versus ARC-related symptoms, the problems of AIDS classification, or the estimated percentages of HIV carriers who will progress to have fully expressed AIDS reflect many of the views and hypotheses during the last 5 years, which have often proved to have been only transient. The particular problems of diagnosing AIDS in newborns and early infancy are not discussed; some inaccuracies are disturbing ("... in 1980 in a Nairobi slum 600 prostitutes were tested for antibodies against the AIDS virus ..." or "... all blood donations in the United States, about 1.5 million per year, should be tested ..."). Despite some shortcomings, the book can be recommended as introductory reading matter to "... AIDS, the most significant event of our lifetime ...", as written by V.G. Daniels in the preface to the second edition.

P. Kühnl, Frankfurt

Stickl, H., Weber, H.-G.: Schutzimpfungen. Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, New York, 1987. 220 pages, 8 figures, 76 tables. DM 40,—

In this comprehensive treatise, Stickl and Weber present their extensive experience in the field of vaccination. The material is based on their own clinical experience, scientific research, training programs, and numerous discussions with practicing physicians, particularly pediatricians. The authors present the fundamentals of immunity and immunization, practical methods for vaccination, and results in a concise and understandable manner. In addition to active immunization, they enter into the area of passive immunization with immunoglobulins and antisera. In this section, doses are given in milliliters without stating the concentration of the preparation (5% or 16%) or the

method of application: intravenous infusion or intramuscular injection.

The book offers the practicing physician, in particular the pediatrician, competent information on sensible and less-sensible active immunization. It could be recommended to students, although it appears unrealistic to think that students should read 220 pages of material on which they will hardly be examined. Hopefully, this volume will be widely accepted. The low price will facilitate purchase.

B. Kornhuber, Frankfurt
Translated by B. Boschek

Bolognesi, D.: Human retroviruses, cancer and AIDS: Approaches to prevention and therapy. Alan R. Liss, New York, 1987. 524 pages. \$ 96.00

This book presents the original contributions to a UCLA Symposium held in Keystone, Colorado, from 1–6 April. The articles provide a useful summary of the present state of research activity in the field of HIV infection and AIDS. The title of the book is misleading since it really only deals with the family of HIV (HIV 1, HIV 2 and SIV). Other human retroviruses are only mentioned in individual chapters, as for example HTLV 1 in conjunction with double infections with HIV 1. The connection with malignant diseases is also only indirectly touched upon. A more appropriate title would have been: *Molecular Biology, Prevention and Therapy of HIV Infections*.

Apart from the above-mentioned reservations, which result from an unfortunate selection of a title for the book, this volume presents detailed information about various molecular-biological aspects of HIV and HIV infection. The first series of articles deals with analysis of the genomes of HIV 1 and HIV 2, as well as of the human spuma virus. In a second series of articles, the biological and genetic peculiarities of HIV are examined. The gene products of HIV, in particular of the envelope gene, are treated in the following papers. Two chapters deal with viral pathogenesis, including the role of the CD-4 receptor. The book closes with a summary of the routes presently being followed toward the development of a vaccine and toward antiviral therapy.

An intrinsic strength of this book is the fact that the leading American and international research groups present the status of their research efforts to date in the form of original scientific communications. The relatively rapid publication of the book was made possible by the use of manuscript offset technique.

In summary, this book provides the clinical and scientific AIDS researcher with a useful source of information.

R. Hehlmann, München
Translated by B. Boschek