CD-ROM Review

Endoscopy of the Airways in Anesthesiology
© 2000

Professor Bob Smalhout MD PhD

This free CD-ROM comes courtesy of Agilent Technologies, an offspring of Hewlett-Packard. Interestingly, Agilent Technologies does not sell endoscopy equipment; their motive in this initiative appears to be entirely free of commercial interests. The presentation consists of a number of narrated video segments with accompanying textual materials linked together using Macromedia Director. The end result is splendid, even flawless. General topics covered include normal adult and pediatric anatomy, common pathological conditions, selection of endoscopic equipment and related endoscopic and anesthetic techniques. A comprehensive bibliography is also included.

The CD-ROM also comes with two bonuses: a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader Version 4 and a copy of Smalhout's 50 page booklet on capnography, which one reads using the above mentioned reader software. This is a good example of the way educational CD-ROMs should be done. Highly recommended.

D. John Doyle
Toronto, Ontario

Web Site Review

Bioethics.net
<http://bioethics.net>

Bioethics, sometimes defined as "the moral implications of science, medicine and research", remains an important topic for medical students and practitioners alike. This site, sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania Center for Bioethics, is rich in content on the topic of bioethics and will certainly appeal to most readers interested in contemporary bioethical controversies.

For medical students, residents and academic faculty, one very useful feature of this site is a section called "Bioethics for Beginners". This page contains educational tools to help people learn about "what bioethics means, how it is studied, and where it can take you".

For individuals who wish to publish an article on a bioethical topic, there is a section to help guide journal selection and to help with matters of style and content. Other sections offered at the site include

discussions on cloning and genetics, bioethical dilemmas in the emergency department (sample topic: treatment of minors for sexually transmitted diseases), discussions on physician-assisted suicide, as well as a collection of news clips dealing with contemporary news items with bioethical implications. There is also a section listing conferences that viewers may wish to attend, a comprehensive collection of links and even a local search engine.

For a site so comprehensive in content, one topic is quite notable by its absence: there is almost no discussion on the topic of therapeutic abortion.

I highly recommend this site.

D. John Doyle
Toronto, Ontario

Product Review

Intel Pocket PC Camera

As an avid Internet user, I had been contemplating buying either a "Web Cam", for Internet videoconferencing using programs such as Microsoft Net Meeting, or a digital camera to add images to my Web pages quickly and easily.

The new Pocket PC Camera from Intel allows me to do both, and a lot more, at the very reasonable price of \$229.

The unit looks like a small point-and-shoot camera. It has an optical viewfinder, an on/off switch, a shutter button and a mode button. Away from a computer it takes up to 100 640x480 pixel images, or a few short videos. Unlike more expensive cameras, there is no way to review or delete these shots until the camera is connected to a PC using the USB connector. The images download very quickly - about a minute for 50 images. They can then be saved to the computer's hard drive, or deleted. The camera is then empty and ready for reuse.

Connected to the computer, the camera will take unlimited shots, or many minutes of video. (There is a time limit to prevent users filling their whole hard drive with one long video.) The focus knob allows one to do closeups. The camera can also be used for video conferencing, using Net Meeting, which is included in the software bundle. The camera can also be used to take time-lapse photography, or to automatically update an image on a Web page.

There is no flash, but this does not seem to be a problem, as the camera works well by normal room lighting.