Book reviews

Johnny come lately. A short history of the condom. By Jeannette Parisot. (Pp 125, illustrated, £4.95 paperback). London: Journeyman Press, 1987.

The English edition of this German publication is said to be "enlarged" with "new material and revisions". The approach varies from the frivolous, through the lighthearted, to the level of acceptable education by entertainment.

It is not short on well adorned facts. Hackneyed history is mercilessly dismissed and replaced by literary extracts from a wide variety of eighteenth and nineteenth century texts. The technologies underlying the manufacture, testing, and use of chemical adjuvants are presented in detail. The illustrations are apt and adequate. The place of the condom in the development of the birth control movement receives no formal attention. Indeed, in the twentieth century more than ever before, the condom relies for its standing as a preventive of sexually transmitted diseases. This message of safe sex is reinforced for travellers and tourists by a buyers' guide in seventeen languages.

The opportunity is missed to raise condom usage to an art form. Nowhere is there a description of how a man may "arm" himself single handedly or his partner bimanually.

R S Morton

The search for the virus. The scientific discovery of AIDS and the quest for a cure. By Steve Connor and Sharon Kingman. (Pp 240, illustrated, £3.95 paperback). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1988.

This is by far the best paperback on HIV infection and its consequences that has come my way. It is thorough, accurate, and up to date. The whole subject is presented with commendable and commanding logic, terms are defined on first being used, and the writing has a compelling quality. Thus a mass of factual information is readily absorbed, and the many discussion pieces and summaries are memorable.

The two writers show more penmanship than the average technical writer. This comes through in a story telling quality, especially as they dismiss Africa as the infection's country of origin and in their brief biogra-

phical sketches of the contenders for recognition as discoverer of the virus.

I rate this book as a "best buy". It will match the needs of intelligent laymen as well as clinic and ward nursing staff. It is an ideal primer for those of us beginning to deal with our first patients with AIDS and who will be incorporating the topic of HIV and AIDS in lectures to a widening variety of audiences.

R S Morton

AIDS therapeutics in HIV disease. By Michael Youle, Janet Clabour, Paul Wade, Charles Farthing. (Pp 162, £7.95). Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988.

This handy pocket sized manual on the therapeutics of AIDS and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) contains 14 chapters and three appendices. The appendices contain information on further reading, the CDC definition of AIDS, and lastly a section containing abbreviated data sheets for 27 drugs used in HIV infection. Some of these drugs include unlicensed preparations and there are some useful names and phone numbers of people to contact for these drugs. The text is supplemented by 19 figures or tables and, surprisingly for the size of the book, over 240 references. The topics covered by the chapters include a brief introduction to the subject, its definition, antibody testing, controlling infection, and disinfection. There are also chapters on each of the major systems, that is, chest, gastrointestinal, and skin problems as well as disseminated infections, Kaposi's sarcoma, lymphoma, psychological and psychiatric illness, and antiretroviral treatment.

The book essentially concentrates on the management of HIV infection. It is easy to find one's way around the book helped by the heading on each page. The chapters contain useful summaries of the available treatments for common problems caused by infection with HIV.

The authors acknowledge that the book is slightly limited because it is based on the St Stephen's practice, which is largely homosexual. Despite this, however, it is a book that I think will be extremely useful to the increasing numbers of doctors, both junior and senior, looking after such patients, especially away from the major London centres. I am therefore happy to recommend it as an essential pocket book for all those associated with the care of patients with AIDS and HIV infection.

R P Brettle

Notices

8th Meeting of the International Society for Sexually Transmitted Disease Research (ISSTD)

The 8th meeting of the ISSTD will be held on 10-13 September 1989 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

For further information please contact the meeting organisers: DIS Congress Service, Linde Allé 48, DK-2720 Vanløse, Copenhagen, Denmark or the scientific secretariat (Mrs Sandra Hyman), Statens Serum-institut, Neisseria Department, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark.

Conference on vaccines for sexually transmitted diseases

A conference on vaccines for sexually transmitted diseases will be held on 5-7 April 1989 at Oxford University. It is sponsored by the journal, *Vaccine*, and the World Health Organisation.

For further information, please contact DE Cogan, Vaccines for Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Butterworth Scientific Ltd, PO Box 63, Westbury House, Bury Street, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 5BH (Tel. 0483 300966).

International symposium and tutorial on genital papillomavirus infections: advances in modern diagnosis and treatment

The above conference will be held on 3-5 February 1989 in Hamburg, West Germany.

For further information, please contact: Congress Organisation, SFK, Sander Fachkongress, Organisation, Blumenau 23, 2000 Hamburg 75, Federal Republic of Germany.