
If this book were reduced to its essential message it would state that by attaching a suitable television camera to a Zeiss fundus camera a picture of the fundus can be shown on a television screen and that this picture can be modified by various electronic methods, including image intensification. This technique may replace current methods of ophthalmoscopy and cinematography, and though these as yet give better defined images, the television method should be very useful for the instant demonstration of the fundus to a large number of people. By an incredible feat of expansion, however, this message occupies almost 100 pages.

The first sentence of the foreword, though not written by the author, forewarns of the literary style: “This book is the first systems analysis of medical-engineering efforts (and prospects) toward visualization and eventual computer analysis of a complex biomedical image, the retina”. A second warning comes from the author, who says in the preface “... the information provided in this text is largely of a general nature dealing with the principles of television ophthalmoscopy, and it should be regarded only as a guide”. These ominous premonitions are amply fulfilled.

It is not that much informed hard work has not been involved, but one wonders who will benefit from reading this book. It is surely not written for the experienced ophthalmologist who can hardly need telling that “the (optic) disc area is approximately 1·5 mm. in outside diameter, with a roughly circular shape and reasonably distinct margins in a normal patient” (p. 36). The author does not describe the intriguing entity of a normal patient, but the really obtuse reader is reminded that “the optic disc... is roughly circular with an approximate diameter of 1·5 mm. and having a reasonably distinct border...” (p. 49). On the other hand the book is surely not for the television engineer, as the details given are well within the comprehension of the reviewer.

The second edition of this book may well be useful. With any luck it will describe in detail the instrumentation and the practical results of the apparatus with a clear indication of its superiority over current methods. Ophthalmologists would be advised to wait until this volume appears. In the meantime the author may well have read Gower’s “Plain Words”.


A short exposition of the problems to be dealt with by those who work in this field. Group psychotherapy is given detailed attention.


This book was planned originally by its author, Professor Thiel, as a therapeutic supplement to his Atlas of Eye Diseases. While in previous editions of the Atlas short therapeutic notes were appended to each chapter, it was decided to publish a “Therapy Primer” alongside the 6th edition of the Atlas as a separate book. The manuscript left behind by the author at the time of his death in 1967 was much more than a primer. Besides a thorough description of the disease pictures, complete with history, aetiology, pathology, and differential diagnosis, the book contains guidelines for therapeutic management and examples of treatment, which have stood the test of time in the author’s long career. There is very little to add to these prefatory remarks by Prof. Hollwich, who has brought the book up to date and edited the present edition, except that it is a master work of its kind. The interested reader is not being simply inundated with a multitude of procedures on “a take-it or leave-it” basis, but is given good advice by a wise teacher. At every page one wonders how in so short a space so...