

Yearbook of Infectious Diseases, 1991. Eds A. B. WOLFF, C. D. BARZA, D. E. KEVSCH, F. G. KLEMPNER and H. I. SNYDER. Pp. 311. London: Wolfe; 1991. £39.00.

One of the growth industries in scientific publishing in recent years has been the increasing availability of review material. In the area of infectious diseases, this has included personal selections of the published literature with a synopsis of the key issues and a commentary while others have attempted a much more comprehensive approach in the form of review journals such as *Current Opinion in Infectious Diseases*. This particular offering is based on a survey of 850 health journals from around the world, with a predominance of American publications. The editors have selected articles for summary and comment, much in the tradition of *Abstracts in Hygiene*. The bias reflects North American practice in infectious diseases. It provides a compendium of 190 articles, divided into 11 chapters. Each article is described briefly, often accompanied by a key table or figure to which has been added commentary which may be critical, interpretative or emphasize important aspects of the work. Inevitably, the range of material is limited, but for the busy specialist, lacking the ability to have access to or screen such a wide range of journals, it provides a useful means for keeping up to date. However, although bearing the year 1991 this is misleading since all papers date from 1989. Since only the key message is presented those interested in the design, methodology and analysis of the data must refer to the primary source. The volume was easy to read and well indexed. A personal copy seems desirable for browsing, which might then find its way to the reference section of a personal or departmental library.

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