BOOK REVIEWS

Elizabeth Connor, Book Review Editor

Medical Reference Services Quarterly considers for review reference materials and professional literature of interest to health sciences librarians. Substantially changed or expanded new editions or supplements of reference works may also be included. It is the purpose of each review to provide a detailed description and critical evaluation of the work. Recommendations for purchase are also included. Whenever possible, full bibliographic information is provided. Reviews reflect the opinion of the individual reviewer, not of the editor or publisher of *Medical Reference Services Quarterly.*

Anyone interested in becoming a book reviewer for *Medical Reference Services Quarterly* is invited to contact the Book Review Editor: Elizabeth Connor, Daniel Library, The Citadel, 171 Moultrie Street, Charleston, SC 29409. E-mail: elizabeth.connor@citadel.edu.

VIRTUAL REALITY TECHNOLOGY, 2nd ed. Burdea, Grigore C., and Coiffet, Philippe. *Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003. 444p. ISBN 0-471-36089-9. $115.00.*

This comprehensive textbook describes the history of virtual reality from its beginnings about forty years ago, through present and future uses. Virtual reality is defined as "a high-end user-computer interface that involves real-time simulation and interaction through multiple sensorial channels. These sensorial modalities are visual, auditory, tactile, smell and taste." The authors use a great deal of "computerese" and scientific jargon to describe virtual reality as it relates to this definition, but there are many instructive graphic visuals that help the non-initiated to understand the subject. The section on medical use of virtual reality describes the training of medical professionals and students, e.g., in digital rectal exams, surgical procedures, and endoscopies, as well as instruction in anatomy using the Virtual Human model.

As a textbook, this book has been designed to aid the student of virtual reality technology by including definitions, outlines of sections, conclusions, review questions, and an extensive bibliography. In addition to the text, this book comes with a CD that contains a lab manual, seven programming projects, homework exercises, and simulations that enhance the printed information. Although this book goes into great detail that the student studying virtual reality will appreciate, the latter chapters will be of interest to those who are interested in its uses and not so much in how and why it works.

Margaret Vugrin
Preston Smith Library of the Health Sciences
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
Lubbock, TX