

Book Reviews

The Yearbook of Chiropractic, 1995

Dana J Lawrence, editor

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The editorial stature of Dana Lawrence continues its ascension with the latest Yearbook of Chiropractic (1995). This is a collection of 250 abstracts of journal articles, published during 1993, which are considered by the editorial panel to be of interest and relevance to the definitive chiropractic profession. As such they can be collectively viewed as representing the chiropractic science literature base for 1993.

Readers may be familiar with the Yearbook of Chiropractic from the 1994 edition which reviewed the 1992 year. A number of refinements have been made to the current edition which makes it more user friendly, including an expanded number for each listed abstract. Whilst a key number was included in the first volume, this year it is designed to identify the publication, the volume year, the section, and the abstract. The purpose is to allow the reader to take easy advantage of the publisher's "document express system", which with one phone call will result in the delivery of a full copy of the paper itself. This is a delightful strength of the publication as it allows the reader to take delivery, by a variety of means including Internet, of current material in an almost overnight manner. The cost of this service is also most reasonable, and whilst this review must not be seen as a commercial endorsement, it should be noted as being a benefit to the profession for chiropractors world-wide to now have such ready access to the original literature base.

This year the volume draws from at least 80 journals, including "McGregor's Magazines", a recognition that, in some cases, articles of value may indeed be published in a variety of sources and not just the peer reviewed, indexed literature. Herein lies the greater value of this particular volume as it accesses a vast range of literature and selects those papers of the most specific relevance to the profession.

The 250 papers are collected in five sections, namely Clinical Management, Evaluation, Basic Sciences, Health Problems, and Professional Issues. These are the same five divisions as used in the first volume and, as with the 1994 volume, each division is subdivided into topics of a common theme. For example, "Evaluation" has papers arranged according to "Orthopaedics", "Imaging Modalities" (Plain Film, CT and MRI, Ultrasound) then "General Diagnostics", and "Complications and Contraindications". Again these subdivisions continue the pattern set in the first volume and make for easy comparison between the two. Another valuable change is the listing of additional reading at the end of Chapter 5. This section lists a further 96 papers which the editors felt have value in some respect. As with the first edition there is a comprehensive subject index, and a concise author index.

Of particular importance is the realisation that of the 250 papers, only 22.4% (n = 56) are sourced from the specific chiropractic literature base. This means that almost 80% of literature considered to be of relevance to the profession is appearing in journals outside the scope of reading of the typical chiropractor. This is not an unusual

thought as it is indeed the purpose of a year book to ensure that relevant literature is thoroughly scoured, but it emphasises that even if a practitioner read every journal that was published as a chiropractic journal or magazine, he or she would still miss some 80% of relevant articles and papers.

Another point of great interest is the disappointingly low number of papers in which the first author is associated with a chiropractic college. There are 25 such papers, representing 10% of the collection. These 25 papers represent 9 chiropractic colleges and add support to the argument that chiropractic colleges are not the home of chiropractic science. Interestingly, 118 papers (47.2%) were attributed to a university, as is to be expected with the role that universities take as being the source of knowledge. The remaining 40% or so of papers are generated by stand-alone research institutes, hospitals, and, to a small degree, private practitioners. As with the 1994 edition, the 3 leading colleges (RMIT, LACC and this year North Western) accounted for 60% of the published research identified with a chiropractic college.

The Yearbook of Chiropractic continues to be an extremely valuable collection of contemporary chiropractic science and as such is, without a doubt, essential reading for every practitioner.

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