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BOOK REVIEW

Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat

Craig E. Greene

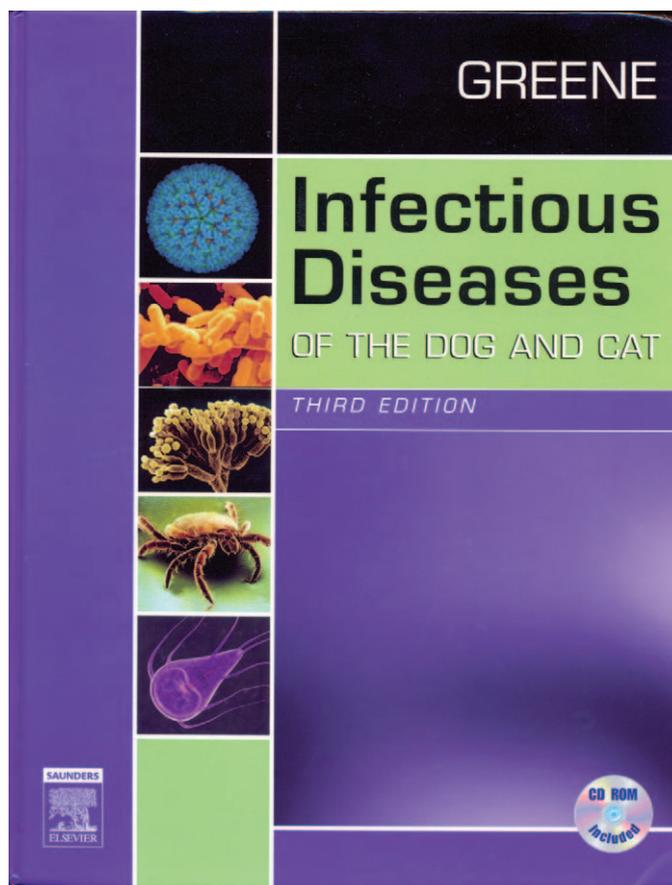
Published by Elsevier, 2006, 3rd edition, hardback, 1424 pages, Price £73.99, ISBN-10: 1416036008, ISBN-13: 978-1416036005

This is the third edition of a textbook that was first published in 1990. Since that time "Greene's" has become the standard reference book for infectious diseases in cats and dogs. About half the chapters of the book were originally authored by Dr Greene but in each subsequent edition more authors have been recruited. In the current edition there are more than 100. The authorship list has an international element; however the large majority are American.

The overall first impression is that this new edition is bigger, clearer, easier to use and more interesting to look at. At 1424 pages this edition is 50 percent bigger than its predecessor. It is also better produced with the widespread use of colour photos and diagrams. All the tables are coloured. Each section is demarcated by a coloured bar down the edge of the page. This looks nice but I did not find it useful when looking up a disease. The paper quality, in common with many large textbooks, is lightweight but serviceable. The previous edition was not a book that a student would find easy to learn from, or a practitioner to study, but the new edition contains illustrations, diagrams and tables that would stimulate any interested student or practitioner to read a chapter in its entirety or simply to dip in. It is now a book to which a practitioner could refer with confidence that the information would be easy to find. These changes make this far better value to the practitioner than its previous editions. This is an important development for this textbook because it means that it has moved from being just an academic's reference point to also being a practitioner's consulting tool.

All of these additional photographs have come with an editorial price. All reference lists have been deleted from this edition save for a few key references at the end of the chapter and are now presented separately on a CD. The CD ran first time in my computer and was reasonably easy to use. This practice of issuing a CD with a textbook is becoming more commonplace; however whether this is an overall advantage or disadvantage will depend on the user. Although I accept that many users of this textbook will not want access to these references, there are equally many academics and students who do. Many people who would want to use these reference lists will use this book in a library but they will find in two or three years that the disc will be lost or not available.

The book is divided into six sections – viral and rickettsial diseases, bacterial diseases, fungal diseases, protozoal diseases, clinical problems and finally an infectious diseases formulary. A huge range of diseases is covered in the first four sections. The level of detail varies enormously. Some chapters contain considerable detail on molecular pathogenesis which, although interesting, does not have immediate use in the clinics. If the editorial drive for this textbook is to be more "clinical practitioner" focussed then some of this detail is excessive and could be reduced. All of the chapters however are sufficiently detailed for most uses and contain considerable quantities of referenced information



that will satisfy individuals studying for specialist qualifications in medicine.

The fifth section on clinical problems contains a variety of chapters on infections of the various body systems and then a series of chapters on such topics as immunoprophylaxis, fever, prevention of infections in multi-animal environments and zoonoses. These are well worth studying independently of the main disease monographs as they contain a host of useful concepts and information.

The formulary section is very orientated towards the USA. Some of the drugs are not available in the UK or to use them would be against the cascade. Many rarely used drugs are also listed. Some anti-bacterials in particular would be considered a last resort on both cost and medical grounds. However this is far from clear reading the formulary.

The stated goal of the book is to provide a comprehensive reference source while at the same time serving as a clinically useful source of information for the diagnosis and treatment of canine and feline infections. I think the authors and editor have achieved this admirably. This new edition is far more than just an updating of the second edition. There has been a significant increase in the quality of the production and a definite shift in editorial policy. It is not a book for every branch practice but rather is a book for a major hospital or a reference library. Its cost is a considerable investment but it is definitely better value than the second edition.

Dr Ian Ramsey