

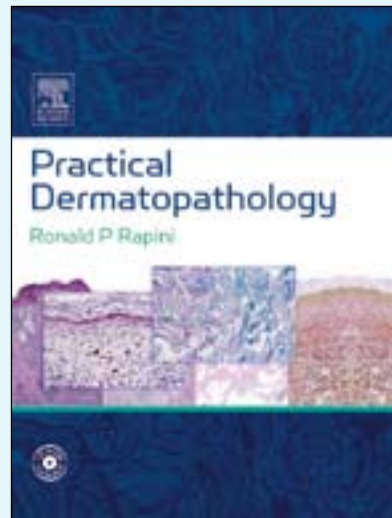
Practical Dermatopathology

Ronald P Rapini
Elsevier Mosby 2005
Price £89.00. Pp 395
ISBN 0323011985

This book is an excellent introduction to the evaluation and diagnosis of skin biopsies, although it does assume basic histological knowledge, for example normal skin structure and definitions of histological terms. It describes the histological features of a range of different skin diseases but with a strong clinical emphasis.

The first chapter consists of lists of differential diagnoses of both histological features seen on slides, as well as clinical features seen on patients. Each disease listed is cross referenced to a slide within the body of the book, making it easy to locate information quickly.

The remainder of the book is divided into chapters based on disease groups. For each disease, there is a concise description of the clinical features, followed by a list of the main histological features. The numerous accompanying colour histological photographs are appropriate and clearly labelled to highlight the important points. Each disease has a list of variations and a differential diagnosis, with their unique histological and clinical correlates. It is the combination of these features, unique to this book, which aids in making an



accurate diagnosis. This book covers a range of diseases from the most common to the rare unheard of, eponymous syndrome. Each disease is well illustrated with over seven hundred colour slides. The book emphasizes clinical features of disease and is useful in formulating a differential diagnosis. It is essential reading for junior pathologists and dermatologists and

would be ideally placed next to your microscope.

Lyndsey Paul, Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield

Postgraduate Medical Education and Training: A Guide for Primary and Secondary Care

Edited by Anne Hastie, Ian Hastie, Neil Jackson
Radcliffe Publishing 2005
Price £27.95. Pp 276
ISBN 1 85775 628 2

The world of postgraduate education and training has changed so rapidly that many doctors, regardless of their speciality or grade, often feel left in the dark. With conflicting advice and opinions from colleagues, executives and indeed the general public, it has not been easy to gain a clear picture of the current structure of training in the UK.

This book gives a clear, concise and very easy to understand summary of the current issues. Written by experts in their field, yet designed for professionals at all stages of training, it starts with a brief history of postgraduate organization, and short descriptions of the main governing bodies.

The subsequent chapters cover a range of relevant topics, including the European working time directives, flexible training and details of the new foundation programme.

Some areas are more focused on junior doctors, for example discussions of specialist registrar training, career counselling and recruitment to general practice. More senior staff will benefit from reading sections

such as managing the trainee doctor in difficulty, with clear and practical advice on how to manage such a complex problem.

GP training and maintaining further education is covered in detail, including a good analysis of the GP flexible career scheme, as well as a chapter on training GPs with a specialist interest. Of particular interest is a thorough discussion of the pathways and practicalities for returning to medicine (both hospital and general practice) after time out.

Last, but not least, is a section on clinical ethics and the law which would be of interest to all practising doctors.

This is a fascinating and thorough book, which as well as explaining all the current topics in postgraduate education and training, also gives detailed and practical advice on the issues it discusses. I recommend it highly.

Claire Vandeveld, Derby City Hospital, Derby

An Essential Medical Miscellany

Ayan Panja
RSM Press 2005
Price £12.95. Pp 119
ISBN 1 85315 631 0

There is a cartoon by Gary Larsen, which shows a group of clipboard-wielding doctors in white coats surrounding a patient who is laughing and looking well. The caption refers to the fact that tests show

how laughter is the best medicine. The appropriate use of humour may indeed be a powerful tool to help communicate with patients and colleagues alike. There is much that is gently amusing about this book by Dr Panja, and could easily become a source of material for many a humorous conversation. My two favourites include the item on the legality of duelling in Paraguay (providing both duellists are registered blood donors), and details of the man who spent 2 years eating a Cessna 150 light aircraft.

The idea for the book may not be entirely original, however, as 'miscellany' books have been popularized by Schott and subsequent others. Like other miscellany books, they may be criticized as being full of entirely trivial information; any more serious information is either out-of-place because it is not really funny, or could be found in a proper academic book. This is the problem with miscellany books, and the opinion as to their validity is probably therefore very variable.

Despite these objections, Panja's book is a very worthy volume, and doubtless considerable effort was expended in compiling it. Without trying too hard I spotted one small error – in the piece on Lorenz's oil, but it was otherwise sound. This enjoyable book could well become a steady stocking filler at Christmas.

Tim Murphy, Freeman Hospital, Newcastle-upon-Tyne