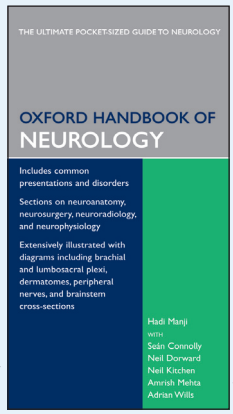
Oxford Handbook of Neurology

Hadi Manji, Sean Connelly,
Neil Dorward, Neil Kitchen,
Amrish Mehta, Adrian Wills
Oxford University Press 2006
Price £29.95. Pp 534
ISBN 0198509731

In this handbook, Dr Manji and co-authors have put together an excellent summary and guide to neurology, which is both aimed at the symptomatic presentation and disease based. The book is excellently written, packed with wise clinical points and covering a wide differential diagnostic base.

There are numerous useful anatomical diagrams to remind one of the finer peripheral nerve details and a host of useful images. The handbook covers so much but in such a short volume. I would recommend to senior and junior colleagues and I found reviewing it highly educational (it now lives in my briefcase).



The only notable omission is neuropsychiatry. Occasionally the lists suffer from what all handbooks do – which is to not separate the common and sensible from the fantastical. Overall I think that this book is a considerable achievement and is well worth the modest price.

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Recent Advances in Paediatrics 23

Edited by Timothy David
RSM Press 2006
Price £35.00. Pp 256
ISBN 1853156523

Recent Advances in Paediatrics 23 is the latest book in an annually produced successful series for clinical paediatricians. Inevitably in a world of burgeoning scientific publications it is difficult for all of us to keep up to date across a massive range of medical practice.

The task for the editor is daunting as this pot-pourri of topics needs to appeal to a wide range of readers from beginners at the start of their paediatric career studying for exams to more senior clinicians who are keen to find out about newly evolving subjects. The editor must hope that each individual will read some chapters in great detail but look to the key points summaries for general messages in other areas that are of less immediate interest.

Overall the 15 chapters are informative and clinically relevant. Some authors struggle to produce succinct key summaries and these overflow on to a second page – this should be banned by the editor! Some areas covered are likely to be less popular such as laboratory diagnosis and the gene mutations of von Willebrand disease as we would all defer to a haematologist for advice and perhaps the same point can be made for some aspects of genetic variants of cystic fibrosis.

Another philosophical point is whether neonatology should be included? Certainly topics that will be encountered in a level one or two setting such as birth asphyxia should be but what about tertiary care subjects exclusive to extremely low birth weight infants?

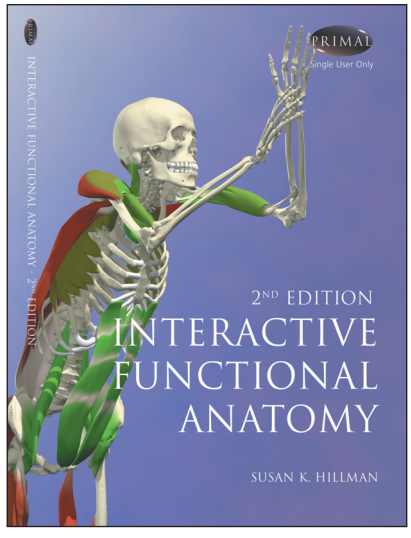
There is a slight excess of obese tables and more figures and photographs would enhance reader appeal. However, overall this book does its job admirably and should be in our personal and paediatric unit bookshelves. Change and development is the cutting edge of good medicine and we should all be there.

Nick Mann, Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading

Interactive Functional Anatomy (2nd edn) DVD-ROM

Susan K Hillman
Primal Pictures 2007
Price £145.00
ISBN 9781904369646

Anatomy has traditionally been taught by dissection; the spatial relationship of muscles and organs to one another can be observed 'in the flesh'. As dissection becomes less common, students of all levels are having to rely on two-dimensional drawings and photographs to assist their anatomical understanding.



Hillman has combined computer software techniques with an intricate knowledge and understanding of musculoskeletal anatomy. Peeling away superficial layers, rotating the image and zooming in and out allows the user to visualize the structures in question. Numerous video clips with superimposed animation shows the movements of most of the joints and effects of individual muscle and muscle groups.

The on-screen tools to manipulate the image and navigate around the body are easy to use, and there is no apparent lag with the graphics on a modern computer. A search facility allows the individual to quickly identify a specific structure which can be studied graphically or read about by accompanying text.

It is most unfortunate that the package fails to address the internal anatomy of the brain and viscera which limits its marketability somewhat. Its high price tag will also deter the average student (irrespective of their level of study).

The first edition of this software was very warmly received and has enjoyed many good reviews. This second edition has been enhanced to include more muscles, more videos clips, and more manipulating power. I'm sure it will have even more appeal to those with an interest in teaching and learning musculoskeletal anatomy.

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