

Seminars in General Adult Psychiatry (2nd edn)

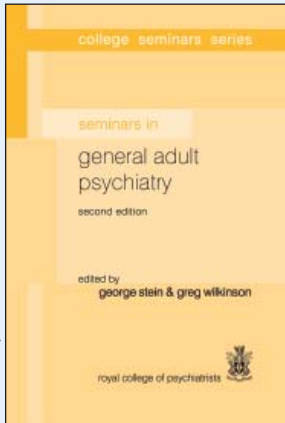
Edited by George Stein and Greg Wilkinson

Gaskell 2007

Price £65.00. Pp 834

ISBN 978 1 904671 44 2

This is a great book. The second edition of what was in itself a very comprehensive and useful textbook, with well-organized chapters, that have also been well referenced, clearly takes the project further. Using a multi-author format, but with some nicely idiosyncratic inclusions, as well as a comprehensive collection of tables and summarizing boxes, this is both interest-



ing to read and covers all the necessary aspects of that broadest of topics, general adult psychiatry.

However, as the editors rightly point out, although it is over 9 years since the first edition of this book, more has stayed the same than has changed. They note the introduction of NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) guidelines, improved evidence-based medicine, and there are up-to-date reviews of psychiatric services as well as cross-cultural perspectives. My favourite chapters are those on the 'clinical features of depressive disorder', by Alan Lee, and on 'conversion and dissociative disorders, hypochondriasis and chronic

pain' by Tom Brown and Harold Merskey. This latter is a masterpiece of summarizing an extraordinarily complex and controversial literature, noting the significant health burden of those presenting with medically unexplained symptoms.

If you want to prepare a lecture, look up an unusual case or check out the literature in any area of general psychiatry, this is your book. It is clearly written and designed, as fresh as any textbook can be, and should be on any general adult consultant psychiatrist's desk, given its comprehensive and accessible nature. While it is now a single volume (compared to the previous double volume) and over 800 pages long, this is a remarkably detailed, easy to use, and (for the next year or two at least) surprisingly up-to-date intellectual resource.

Trevor Turner, City & Hackney Centre for Mental Health, London

Introduction to Research Methodology for Specialists and Trainees (2nd edn)

Edited by PM Shaughn O'Brien and Fiona Broughton Pipkin

RCOG Press 2007

Price £32.00. Pp 280

ISBN 978 1 904752 01 1

This second edition of a guide first published by the RCOG Press in 1999 sets out to provide a practical guide to planning and successfully completing a period of research to 'trainees in all subjects related to health'. In this it broadly succeeds, although with some limitations.

A major strength of the book is its clear presentation of the important elements involved in planning a research project. The chapters covering planning research, applying for grants and negotiating ethics committees are lucidly written and jargon-free, and the advice regarding appraising research literature and designing clinical trials is particularly helpful and relevant – to all clinicians, not just potential researchers.

Given the background of the contributors, it is unsurprising that most examples are drawn from the field of obstetrics and gynaecology. Although the editors are at pains to state that these examples are just as relevant to other specialities, this gives parts of the book an exclusive feel which could have been easily remedied. While strong on planning clinical research, and including excellent advice on statistics and

epidemiology, there is less help for those considering research at a more basic science level. There is little practical advice on collaborating with non-clinical colleagues and, at just five pages, the chapter on laboratory research feels somewhat short.

Overall this is a worthwhile and readable introduction to research methodology which should prove informative for most trainees, particularly those considering clinical research, but one which could have had a more widespread appeal had it taken a more inclusive approach.

Simon Taylor, Imperial College, London

Oxford Specialist Handbooks in Cardiology: Echocardiography

Paul Leeson, Andrew Mitchell, Harald Becher

Oxford University Press 2007

Price £34.95. Pp 549

ISBN 978 0 19 921575 1

The *Oxford Specialist Handbook in Cardiology: Echocardiography* is an invaluable tool in the diagnosis and management of patients with cardiac disease. This new handbook is for everyone, cardiologists and cardiac physiologists alike, involved in the direct care of cardiology patients.

The initial chapter provides helpful information on the physics of ultrasound as well as incorporating practical details on recent techniques such as tissue-Doppler imaging, strain and strain rate, and real-time three-dimensional image acquisition that have

become an invaluable aspect to the practise of echocardiography. There is a useful chapter on image acquisition, and a concise review of common echocardiological issues, such as assessment of left ventricular systolic and diastolic function, valvular disease, pericardial disease, and simple congenital heart disease to name but a few.

Particularly valuable chapters are provided on transoesophageal echo and stress echo, which go beyond merely explanations of the two techniques, but which provide detailed practical and technical hints such as patient preparation, instrument set-up and performance, sample consent forms, and sedation guidance.

Written by a group of cardiologists with many years' experience, it combines historical echo knowledge with current evidence-based practise, helping an echocardiographer to providing a comprehensive echo report for the cardiac patient.

Presented in a straightforward and informal style, it gives an easy-to-follow and evidence-based set of steps to help the user through various echo scenarios. Diagrams and 'real-life' images are used extensively throughout the book, and key information, such as what not to miss, severity of valvular lesions, differential diagnoses, are highlighted in eye-catching boxes. The highly readable chapters will help everybody involved in the care of cardiology patients.

Alison Duncan, Royal Brompton Hospital, London