

Landmark Papers in Neurosurgery (2nd edn)

Edited by Reuben D Johnson and Alexander L Green

Oxford University Press 2014

Price £65.00. Pp 416

ISBN 978 0 19 967402 2

This book is an extremely valuable addition to the neurosurgical literature, which I suspect many neurosurgeons will use throughout their training and beyond.

We practice in a professional environment inundated with information, of which some is scientifically validated but at least an equal volume of data is unvalidated. Clinicians may often be overwhelmed by this and may find it challenging to find the evidence base which underpins their practice. This book takes some key neurosurgical papers and studies across a broad range of practice, dis-

sects and critiques them to afford neurosurgeons an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the scientific basis of their practice.

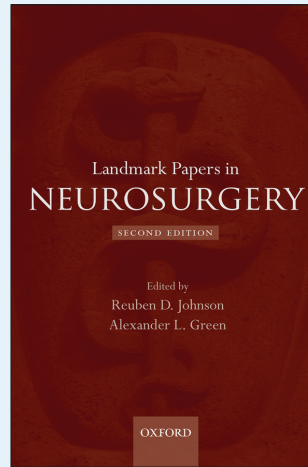
This book will particularly appeal to neurosurgeons in training who are building up their knowledge base. It will also be useful to consultants who might wish to refresh their knowledge. It is, by its nature, not inclusive but I commend the authors for their timely second edition, which is now sitting in our registrar's room fuelling discussions and informing the weekly journal club presentations.

Its layout also provides a useful framework for

trainees to assess other pieces of work. The introduction to each section is well written with a clear précis of what will follow, summarizing methodological difficulties in the scientific studies and giving a rationale for which studies were evaluated.

As the foreword to the first edition so succinctly put it: summary, analysis and critique with pertinent references – the ideal primer for neurosurgical trainees to enhance their knowledge base. With so few treatments in neurosurgery having a solid evidence base, a book such as this is essential.

Chris Chandler, Kings College Hospital, London



Challenging Concepts in Anaesthesia: A case-based approach with expert commentary

Edited by Phoebe Syme, Robert Jackson, Tim Cook
Oxford University Press 2014

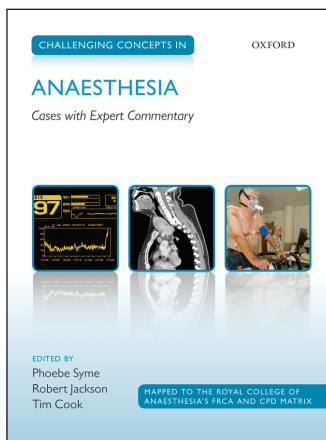
Price £44.99. Pp 288

ISBN 978 0 19 968627 8

This book works, whether you are a trainee or consultant. I hope this book develops as a series.

The content, by way of chapter, is spread across the spectrum including airway management, preoperative risk stratification through tertiary centre work to cardiac disease and acute pain management. Its 261 pages contain 18 real life cases.

The chapter layout is excellent. There are multiple bite-size boxes alongside the flowing text with ample images. These boxes include learning points, clinical tips and expert comment. It is the expert comment that gives the reader the feeling they are reading the book with someone. This expert changes every chapter. You get the impression that you have an expert giving you a tutorial on basic through to advanced consultant level decision making all the time.



For continuing professional development the book is comprehensively mapped to the Royal College of Anaesthetists' matrix. I learnt a great deal from this clear but detailed book. The real clinical cases structure brings relevance, the experts bring top level knowledge.

Very highly recommended to senior trainees and all consultant anaesthetists.

Jon Cort, Chesterfield Royal Hospital, Chesterfield

Ferri's Practical Guide: Fast Facts for Patient Care (9th edn)

Fred F Ferri

Mosby Elsevier 2014

Price £36.99. Pp 616

ISBN 9781455744596

Most UK hospital doctors do not wear white coats anymore, but the books that were originally designed to fit in the pockets have persisted. Professor Frederico (Fred) F Ferri is a geriatrician and internist as well as clinical professor of medicine at Brown University in Rhode Island, USA, who has now published the ninth version of his pocket handbook of medicine. The first edition appeared in 1987.

It is presented in a loose-leaf ring binder format that creates the opportunity for adding pages for one's own notes (because there is not much space for scribbling) and also the option of removing sections and reducing the weight (normally 400 g). The content can also be accessed online through the publisher's Expert Consult website.

Most of the content is provided in bullet point format with abbreviations to save space. There are three main sections, the first being about basic clerking and examination skills and interpretation of blood test results, the second being about the differential diagnosis of common problems (such as 'livedo reticularis' and 'neck mass'), and the third about individual diagnostic entities grouped by specialty. The appendix contains advanced cardiac life support algorithms. There is a detailed index.

For UK medical students and doctors, this handbook is informative and detailed but does often not reflect national guidance and established practice. It is therefore mainly useful for those planning an elective or clinical work in the USA or countries with a similar approach to health care. The content is also effectively un referenced, which makes it harder to get further details if needed.

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