

Burn Care and Treatment

edited by Marc G Jeschke, Lars-Peter Kamolz, Shahriar Shahrokhi
Springer 2013

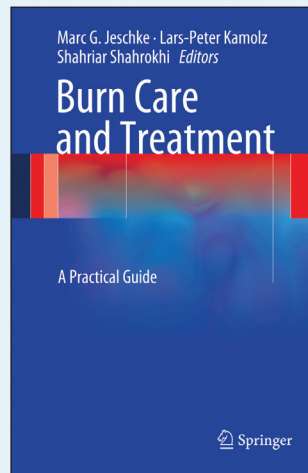
Price £62.99. Pp 188
ISBN 978 3 7091 1132 1

This is a useful textbook for clinicians working in specialist burns care settings. The text is highly detailed, and contains copious relevant and current guidelines and references. This is particularly true of the chapters on burns pathophysiology and critical care.

The sections on acute burn surgery and on reconstruction techniques are espe-

cially useful given the extensive description of the procedures which the authors provide. The summary tables on topics such as infections in burns patients, dermal substitutes and dressings are excellent, and constitute a unique resource.

Readers should be aware that guidelines quoted derive from American and Canadian societies, and may vary from those used



locally. Also, although photographs are included, these are sometimes of limited quality. At £62.99, the price (as well as the depth of content) may be restrictive for junior trainees, but at a more specialist level this is a valuable resource and a very practical reference aid.

Kana Miyagi, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge

Diagnosing Giants

Philip A Mackowiak
Oxford University Press
2013

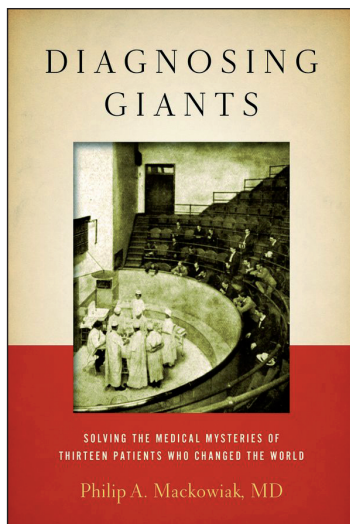
Price £19.99. Pp 225
ISBN 978 0 19 993777 6

Today, as every clinician knows, diagnosis often still remains a difficult and often frustrating art. This in spite of our sophisticated scanning instruments, brilliant endoscopic equipment and a wealth of elaborate biochemical and histological investigations.

How much more difficult was the task before these elaborate aids were available? Today we are fascinated by the puzzles presented to us by the accounts of the illnesses of the famous (and infamous) of the past and how clinicians of those times struggled with these problems.

If you are interested in diagnosis, and most of the readers of this journal will fall into that category, you will enjoy this slim volume. Its author, a Professor of Medicine in the University of Maryland, Baltimore, has for many years conducted clinico-pathological conferences at his medical school based on the case reports of famous people of the past. In this book he records 13 cases, ranging over a period of 3000 years, and discusses their possible diagnosis in the light of current knowledge.

The cases comprise Tutankhamun (some 3000 years ago), Buddha, Caligula, Saladin, John Paul Jones ('father' of the



American navy), the Spanish artist Goya, Simon Bolivar, 'Stonewall' Jackson (a general of the Confederate army in the American Civil War), Lincoln, Darwin, Lenin, Mario Lanza (according to the conductor Toscanini 'the greatest natural tenor of the 20th century'), and Eleanor Roosevelt.

After giving the history, there is a detailed discussion of the differential diagnoses and what might have been revealed had

modern laboratory techniques been available. An enjoyable exercise for us all.

Harold Ellis, Guy's, King's and St Thomas' School of Biomedical Sciences, London

Oxford Specialist Handbook of Pharmaceutical Medicine

Edited by Adrian Kilcoyne, Daniel O'Connor, Phil Ambery
Oxford University Press 2013

Price £39.99. Pp 452
ISBN 978 0 19 960914 7

The authors have applied the extremely successful Oxford Handbook template to pharmaceutical medicine, a relatively recently established medical specialty in the UK, but one with an upward trajectory in terms of trainee numbers and economic importance.

At first sight, it seems unlikely that this specialty would be amenable to this format of textbook. As the editors note, the sheer breadth of subject matter encompassed by

pharmaceutical medicine is daunting, including (but not limited to) medicinal chemistry, pharmacokinetics, clinical trial design, medicines and trial regulation, intellectual property and use of medicines. When I first read through this handbook, my initial reaction was that it would be no substitute for the huge (and expensive) 'traditional' pharmaceutical medicine handbooks. On further reflection, however, these larger tomes do not definitively cover this multi-faceted subject either, and by the very nature of the subject are to a certain extent out of date as soon as they are published.

The format of the *Oxford Handbook of Pharmaceutical Medicine* is simple and clever. Each chapter is a terse outline of a circumscribed area with a link to external websites and published material containing more detailed, up to date information. The editors make the very valid point that their handbook will be used by a wide range of students and professionals, with varying requirements of detail, and this format caters for this diversity. For example, the sections covering clinical pharmacology were particularly well written, albeit that they merely covered the 'bare bones', but with a link to several excellent publications for more detail.

This book will be of use to students and trainees in pharmaceutical medicine alike, when used in conjunction with the references and weblinks provided by the authors, or when used as a means of navigating a larger textbook of pharmaceutical medicine.

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