

Smith and Aitkenhead's Textbook of Anaesthesia (7th edn)

Edited by Jonathan Thompson,
Iain Moppett, Matthew Wiles
Elsevier 2019

Price £79.99. Pp 960
ISBN 978 0 7020 7500 1

Returning in its seventh edition, *Smith and Aitkenhead's Textbook of Anaesthesia* magnificently accomplishes what it sets out to achieve – to 'equip the reader with the basic knowledge and practical considerations required to administer anaesthesia and perioperative care for a whole range of surgical conditions in patients with all common medical comorbidities'.

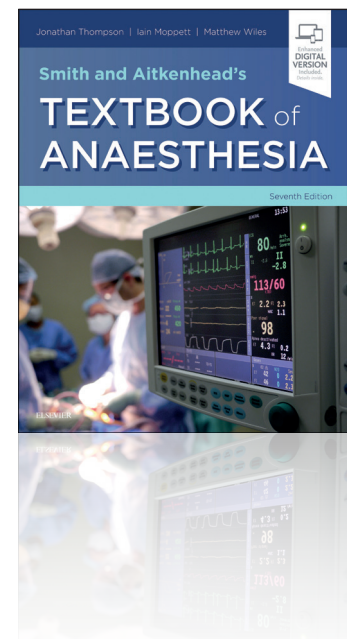
Updated from previous editions by thirty new authors, the subject matter incorporates the four key pillars of anaesthesia: basic sciences, physics and apparatus, fundamentals of anaesthesia and perioperative medicine, and clinical anaesthesia. These colour-coded sections are divided into 48 chapters, the contents

of which are helpfully mapped to the UK Primary FRCA exam syllabus.

Given the sheer volume of material in the book, I was somewhat apprehensive about getting 'stuck in'. However, I was pleasantly surprised, as the editors and publishers have done an absolutely superb job at ensuring this book's clarity and digestibility. Clearly laid out, with well-defined tables and diagrams to add to its lucidity, it is surprisingly easy to read, and no chapter feels overwhelming.

Also available as an eBook (which usefully includes specimen questions and answers with each chapter), the book provides an extensive, yet comprehensive reference text for those interested in anaesthetics and perioperative care. My only frustration towards it is 'Why didn't I use it when I sat the FRCA'?

Edward Gilbert-Kawai, Royal London Hospital, London



Handbook of Emergency Ophthalmology

Edited by Brit Long, Alex Koyfman
Springer 2018

Price £89.99. Pp 293
ISBN 978 3 319 78944 6

The *Handbook of Emergency Ophthalmology* is a manual of ophthalmic conditions which are commonly seen in an emergency setting. The book aims to provide guidance for emergency clinicians, as well as residents, medical students and nurses.

This book is appropriately referenced and easy to read. The first chapters provide a brief, yet comprehensive outline of the ocular anatomy and pharmacology, setting a good foundation for readers, especially emergency physicians and medical students. It provides a well-structured breakdown of common emergency eye conditions into categories which cover the presentation and clinical signs, physical examination, differential diagnosis and management. A broad spectrum of clinical complaints is presented in a concise manner.

The handbook provides step-by-step guidance on the clinical evaluation of a patient with useful tips on how to take

an adequate history. The description of common ophthalmological procedures, accompanied by pictures and useful comments on pearls and pitfalls, is invaluable for ophthalmology trainees on call. Finally, the book also touches upon ophthalmology referrals and categorizes them according to the degree of severity.

This handbook achieves its aim of providing relevant information for busy eyecare professionals. It serves as a quick, yet comprehensive reference guide which can be easily used in an acute setting.
Eleni Karatsai, Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Surrey

Critical

Matt Morgan
Simon and Schuster 2019

Price £16.99 Pp 270
ISBN 978 1 4711 7303 5

Critical is the story of intensive care medicine interspersed with real life cases. I pre-ordered a copy to be critical of a book, written by a relative contemporary of mine from the University of Wales College of Medicine, subsequently phagocytosed by Cardiff University. It gives a peek inside the automated, yet seemingly impenetrable, doors of the intensive therapy unit.

The story begins with the birth of intensive care in the 1950s during the polio epidemic in Copenhagen, travelling through Africa to South Wales. It uses patients' stories as a narrative for advances in medical care but also highlights that just because we can do something it may not always be warranted. The relative merits of research and organ donation are discussed, as well as following up patients and families post-admission to the unit.

Intense care was put into making this book readable but, being critical, I am not sure how penetrable it would be for someone without a vague scientific background, or an insight into the workings of a hospital (even as a patient or relative of someone remotely medical) despite attempts to demedicalise some of the terms used. That said, I really enjoyed the book, learned a few things on the way, and may even have shed a tear or two at points.

Critical would be of use to health-care professionals and students, and even patients and relatives themselves. Its reading may help understand the stresses placed on unwell patients as well as their medical professionals, perhaps opening those doors slightly to the outside world.
Nick Murch, Royal Free Hospital, London