

Recent Advances in Surgery 27

Edited by Colin Johnson, Irving Taylor
Royal Society of Medicine 2004
Price £35.00. Pp 245
ISBN 1853155713

This is the latest edition of a series that is published annually. Most of the chapters review a single recent development in general surgery. Topics from the fields of gastrointestinal, breast, endocrine, transplant and vascular surgery are all included. However, some of the most interesting chapters cover perioperative management and the expanding role of nurse surgical practitioners.

The contributors (predominantly from UK surgical units) have thoroughly reviewed the relevant literature and only quote the most important and recent studies. The book would be of use to a trainee preparing for the MRCS examinations. However, it might be better suited to a higher surgical trainee or consultant looking to update their knowledge in all gen-



eral surgical fields. The final chapter summarizes the most important randomized controlled trials that have been published in the last year. A short read through this chapter would allow any trainee to appear up to date with developments in evidence-based surgery.

The book is mostly text but it is laid out in an easy to read manner. The small number of diagrams and figures are relevant and informative. Throughout each chapter key points are highlighted in boxes. These key points are repeated at the end of each chapter which is probably unnecessary.

In summary the book is relevant and enjoyable. The authors have carefully selected topics that would be of interest to most general surgeons. I would recommend it to any grade of surgeon who wishes to remain informed of advances in all branches of general surgery.

John Scollay, Surgical Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh

The Year in Respiratory Medicine 2004

R Fergusson, A Hill, T Mackay, P Reid, J Simpson
Clinical Publishing 2004
Price £59.99. Pp 448
ISBN 1904392381

Congratulations to the authors of this very comprehensive textbook. It covers the key respiratory topics of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer and infection, with new additions this year of tuberculosis, pulmonary fibrosis, mesothelioma and obstructive sleep apnoea.

In each chapter, the authors have selected several relevant papers from the past year, briefly summarized and then reviewed them. Each review has a comprehensive comments section, with careful application to current prescribing and medical practice.

Although I was initially daunted by the depth of detail and knowledge contained in a surprisingly slim volume, this book does keep your attention. Many of the papers reviewed are very specialized and not relevant to all readers, but the reviews are short and the chapters easy to dip in and out of in order to find papers of individual interest. There is a full list of all papers reviewed, as well as a detailed index.

At the end of most of the reviews is a brief summary. It is well worth select-

ing relevant chapters and reading these summaries if you are short of time, or simply want a brief update of the latest research.

Although this book is primarily designed for respiratory physicians, there is a clear focus on the relevant clinical application of the research. This is of interest to all physicians who invariably have patients with respiratory illnesses, regardless of their specialty. Of particular interest are the sections on treatment for COPD, tuberculosis and insight into current and potential screening techniques for lung malignancy.

Doctors at every level would benefit from selecting relevant sections of this book and applying the resulting findings to their everyday clinical work.

Claire Vandevelde, Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham

Medicine (2nd edn)

John Axford and Chris O'Callaghan
Blackwell Publishing 2004
Price £36.95. Pp 1229
ISBN 0632051620

To produce a book on such a vast subject, with so many competing texts is not a task for the faint hearted. Axford and O'Callaghan have written their second edition to this original text and have again excelled, offering heavyweight competition.

It is always a refreshing change to find a book that aims to give you some real ammunition in your knowledge arsenal. The authors divide each body system, discuss the basic sciences behind each one and then present the common manifestations clinically, along with succinct and easy to remember history and examination. By the end of each chapter, the disease processes are far easier to get your head around, having been presented to you on a gold platter.

Another striking feature of the text is the illustrations. The human mind processes visual input far more readily and the authors have taken advantage of this to the full. The index is easy to navigate, with just about everything from common to obscure contained within. There are also memorable, pathognomonic photographs of common conditions offering an aide memoire for ward rounds or clinic.

I think that this book will be particularly appealing to medical students as it was initially designed with students in mind, but I have found myself continually delving into it as a post-graduate – it really gives you confidence and structure to what you are talking about.

The drawbacks...well, I cannot say a bad word about this text.

Jonny Wilkinson, Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham