PostScript

BOOK REVIEWS

The reviewers have been asked to rate these books in terms of four items: readability, how up to date they are, accuracy and reliability, and value for money, using simple four point scales. From their opinions we have derived an overall "star" rating: * = poor, ** = reasonable, *** = good, **** = excellent.

Key Questions in Surgical Critical Care.

By R U Ashford, T N Evans, R A Archbold. (Pp 235; £24.50.) Greenwich Medical Media, 2003. ISBN 1-84110-092-7. ****

I really liked this book. It deals with most of the critical care topics that come up in surgical MRCS examinations in both an MCQ and viva format. The book is nicely laid out, easy to read, appropriately priced, and about the right size.

There are a few minor problems including grammatical errors—for example, capillary artery wedge pressure. Occasionally the authors appear very certain—for example, choice of inotropes. Also I didn't find the cross references to "surgery" very helpful.

Despite these minor faults, this book was otherwise excellent. I particularly liked the viva questions, which were very comprehensive and supplied with concise answers. Many candidates in the MRCS exam fail because they cannot structure their thoughts to answer the question being asked and this book will help enormously. A word of caution—candidates will still need to read a book on applied surgical physiology as this is a separate subject and not covered here.

Overall I am glad I've got this book and use it regularly for MRCS teaching.

R D Sayers

Senior Lecturer in Surgery, Department of Vascular Surgery, Leicester General Hospital, Leicester

Surgical Critical Care—Vivas.

By Mazyar Kanani. (Pp 233; £19.50.) Greenwich Medical Media, 2003. ISBN 1-84110-131-1. ***

This concise revision aid is directed towards the MRCS candidate but deserves a wider

readership. Sixty five topics such as airway management, inotropes, and shock are dealt with in alphabetical order. The contents cover much of the intensive care section of the MRCS syllabus but some sections are also relevant to the operative surgery viva. For each topic the format chosen is to simulate a viva using focused questions and to provide "model" answers. Any clinician involved in acute specialties will recognise the clinical importance of the areas covered. For its educational value as well as an examination aid I would recommend this book to trainees other than just MRCS candidates.

This book is compact (19 × 13 cm) and the length of the sections (on average 3½ pages per subject) would allow useful study during spare moments in the day.

£19.50 is expensive for a textbook with a few line drawing diagrams and no photographs, but will hold its resale value once the examination has been passed! Our SHO has borrowed the review copy to revise for the MRCS; the author has reached his target readership.

M Dennis

Consultant Vascular Surgeon, Leicester General Hospital, Leicester

Recent Advances in Paediatrics.

Edited by Professor Tim J David. (Pp 231; £35.) Royal Society of Medicine Press Ltd, 2002. ISBN 1-85315-509-8. ****

This paperback book edited by Professor Tim David has 14 chapters written by experts in their field, both from within the UK and abroad.

Topics include noisy breathing, sinusitis, cystic fibrosis, nitrous oxide in alleviating pain, investigation of easy bruising, feeding disorders, diabetic ketoacidosis, warts, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, and the book ends with four chapters regarding the understanding of Muslim customs, the management of a potential organ donor, learning and staying up to date, and ends with a paediatric literature review produced by Professor David himself.

The book is easy to read, set out with appropriate illustrations, photographs, tables, each chapters highlights key points for clinical practice which provide a clear summary of the remaining text. This book will be very useful to all paediatricians training for

their membership exams and for specialist registrars and consultants to help them keep up to date in recent advances in the fields covered.

At £35 for 231 pages, the book is reasonably priced and will be a useful addition to all paediatric departments.

A C Elias-Jones

Consultant Paediatrician, Leicester General Hospital, Leicester

BOOKS RECEIVED

The receipt of these books is acknowledged and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed space permitted. The journal does not publish unsolicited reviews.

Basic Science in Obstetrics & Gynaecology—A Textbook for MRCOG Part 1.

Edited by Michael de Sweit, Geoffrey Chamberlain, Phillip Bennett, MCQs by Richard Johansen. (Pp 350; £32.95.) Harcourt Publishers Limited, 2002. ISBN 0-4430-6150-5.

Heart Failure in Practice.

By Bernard S P Chin, Michael K Davies, Gregory Y H Lip. (Pp 76; £14.95.) Royal Society of Medicine Press Limited, 2002. ISBN 1-85315-487-3.

The Top 100 Drug Interactions: A Guide to Patient Management.

By Philip D Hansten, John R Horn. (Pp 171; \$14.95.) H&H Publications, 2002. ISBN 0-9674718-3-4.

The Science of the Placebo.

Edited by Harry A Guess, Arthur Kleinman, John W Kusek, and Linda W Engel. (Pp 332; £14.95.) BMJ Books, 2002. ISBN 0-7279-1594-0.

The Harriet Lane Handbook [software].

George K Siberry, R Iannone. (£37.00.) Harcourt Publishers Limited, 2002. ISBN 0-323-01877-7.