This book would be invaluable to general surgical trainees, in particular specialist registrars in general surgery who, with changes in surgical training, are likely to have increasingly limited opportunity to become confident in the operative management of trauma. I would also recommend it to all basic surgical trainees involved in the care of trauma patients.

Breast Surgery: A Companion to Specialist Surgical Practice (3rd edn)

MICHAEL DIXON

EXTENT P/H	320 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£67.00 0702027383
PUBLISHER	Saunders (London), 2005
REVIEWER	Hugh Bishop
STAR RATING	*****

The Companion series in specialist surgical practice is designed to meet the needs of surgeons in higher training and to update practising consultants. Does this book achieve its goal? Yes it does: it is superb.

The book logically charts the diagnostic and therapeutic pathway of the present-day breast patient. Its structure reflects the multidisciplinary nature of modern practice in this field, with excellent chapters from radiologists and pathologists. There is an intriguing chapter on ductoscopy in breast cancer by William Dooley, hinting at a new approach in diagnosis.

The surgery of breast cancer is well addressed, the editor himself considering in chapter 4 the crucial issue of the balance between good local control and cosmesis. This is a fair and up-to-date statement of the current position. There are good chapters on partial breast reconstruction and an excellent chapter by Gareth Evans and Andrew Baildam on the genetics of breast cancer and risk-reducing surgery. The chapter on breast reconstruction by Eva Weiler-Mithoff is a concise summary of modern techniques. Adjuvant therapy and radiotherapy are well covered as one might anticipate.

Where the book really scores is in its chapters on 'difficult' subjects like ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS). This is a masterly summary of the present situation in this relatively ill-understood condition. I enjoyed the chapter on uncommon breast cancers, as well as the chapters on psychosocial issues, palliative care and benign breast disease. It is also a salutary reminder of modern surgical breast practice that there is a chapter on litigation.

How easy is this book to use? I have a series of talks on different aspects of breast cancer to deliver in the next 6 months. I have consulted it deliberately to test its usefulness

and I have found it invaluable. The references are excellent, with key references flagged up with a scalpel motif, and an accompanying summary of the paper.

In short, this book has most that the candidate for the Part 3 UK examination needs in preparation. The authors are leaders in their field and give a balanced view on current controversies in breast disease.

Previous editions of *Companions to Specialist Surgical Practice* have combined breast surgery with endocrine surgery. No longer: the overall editors now recognise that breast surgery is an independent specialty that has come of age. This book contains the working detail that breast surgeons need in current practice. The emphasis is on multi-disciplinary working producing good local control of disease by selecting the correct operation for the individual patient. Careful selection can achieve very acceptable oncological and aesthetic results. This book is highly commended. Each breast trainee needs their own personal copy and I am certainly not letting anyone borrow mine.

Spinal Instrumentation: Surgical Techniques

DANIEL KIM, ALEXANDER VACCARO, RICHARD FESSLER

EXTENT P/H	1330 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£225.00 313141331X
PUBLISHER	Thieme (Stuttgart), 2005
REVIEWER	Paul Thorpe
STAR RATING	***

This is a large-volume text aimed at surgeons involved in the field of spinal implantation, including orthopaedic and neurosurgical spinal surgeons as well as fellows and trainees with a specific interest in spinal surgery. The authorship is certainly comprehensive, with the contributors' list reading as a who's who of North American and continental European spinal surgery.

The book aims to be a comprehensive (and it claims 'complete') guide to modern spinal instrumentation. In a different approach to many traditional operative surgery texts, it focuses on implant-specific guidance with a chapter on each proprietary device that the authors have identified as being part of the armamentarium of the modern spinal surgeon. It does not attempt to describe or address different pathologies in the spine and their differing instrumentation requirements but structures the chapters in broad anatomical applications, with a useful summary chapter of anatomical approaches heading each group of implant chapters.

The authors have, therefore, made a laudable attempt to provide an 'implant roadmap', using each chapter to identi-