enthusiastic readers who seek more information to conduct an independent search of the literature.

Critical to this type of publication are the technical descriptions that feature at the core of minimally invasive and endoscopic practice. Herein lies the appeal of the textbook, which delivers this aspect in sufficient detail using simple language, without the chaff. Equipment requirements are appropriately bullet pointed as are the concise peri-operative and technique descriptions. Illustrations are for the most part relevant and complementary to the text but trainees who lack surgical experience (and to whom the book is principally directed) may have to rely on powerful imagination to make up for some of the rather unprofessional sketching.

At £165 this is an expensive buy considering the absence of glossy prints. For the price, however, the purchaser acquires an excellent operative manual in a highly specialised area of paediatric practice, written by leaders in their respective fields. This book, which is currently without competition, should do well but purchasers would have to be cautious to judge by content and not cover.

Your First ENT Job: A Survivor's Guide

MARIE LYONS, ARVIND SINGH

EXTENT P/H	128 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£19.95 1857757483
PUBLISHER	Radcliffe (Oxford), 2005
REVIEWER	Pradeep Morar
STAR RATING	****

This book is a concise, pragmatic guide for the novice in managing patients in ENT surgery. It would be of use on the ward, in the accident and emergency department or in the out-patients clinic, especially to the junior doctor who has not had previous experience of the specialty. It would be of value to any F1/F2 trainees doing ENT as part of a rotation but not particularly wishing to make it their future career. The book will also be of benefit to any number of healthcare workers such as ENT nurse practitioners, accident and emergency nurses and ENT ward nurses. It is a valuable source of quickly available information that will enable the delivery of sound medical management of ENT patients.

Lyons and Singh have created an easy-to-read and easy-to-digest guide. Created in sections for ear, nose and throat, each section is divided into: basic anatomy; basic questions to be asked; how to deal with patients undergoing common problems; and the more common types of surgery and their problems. The common problems and their management are well described and this is usually followed by good tips on how to avoid the pitfalls. The description on the more common ENT procedures should allow the reader to under-

stand the basics and to relay this to the patient if required. However, I feel the description of a mastoid operation is very scant in comparison to others and could be improved. Importantly, after the description of each ENT procedure, the authors have given an outline of all the complications that can occur and which should be looked for.

An early attempt is made to make the guide appealing and relevant to career ENT SHOs in devoting a small detailed schematic diagram of the ear (page 6). Unfortunately, this format has not been carried through the book and the likelihood of this book appealing to the ENT career junior doctor is small.

Illustrations are either monochrome black and white photographs or schematic diagrams. Though not always accurate, the latter are simply done to allow for some useful understanding of anatomy.

A short chapter on pre-admission requirements should further help the reader to remain on the good side of the anaesthetist and the ENT consultant surgeon. This is followed by a section on useful websites and books; although Scott-Brown's *Otolaryngology* (6th edn, 1997) might be a somewhat of an old reference, it will probably be available in most ENT departments. A final section in the book provides a reasonably good glossary of terms.

Lyons and Singh have created a *vade mecum* that should be essential in all ENT departments for the use of nurses and trainee doctors.

Head Injury: Pathophysiology and Management (2nd edn)

PETER REILLY, ROSS BULLOCK

EXTENT P/H	501 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£145.00 0340807245
PUBLISHER	Hodder Arnold (London), 2005
REVIEWER	Ian Anderson
STAR RATING	●●●●●

This is a mighty tome of a textbook compiled by two eminent editors whose reputations have enabled them to draw contributions from a glittering international array of the 'Who's Who' in traumatic brain injury, many of whom can trace their roots from the Glasgow School of Neurosciences.

Nothing is left uncovered in the patient's journey from pre-hospital assessment, transfer to hospital-based initial assessment investigations and definitive care. The style of each chapter is similar throughout and never degenerates into anything approaching a heavy read. As might be expected, there is lavish use of illustrations of high-quality imaging in traumatic brain injury. Each chapter is followed by a most comprehensive list of references.

Multi-author textbooks can often be a mixed bag but each contributor will be recognised as an international expert in his or her own right and their individual contributions have been skilfully gilded by the joint editors. It is amazing that such a complex subject can be so effectively and efficiently covered within 500 pages.

Traumatic brain injury continues to reap devastating effects in both industrialised and non-industrialised countries. It also continues to challenge those who work in civilian practice in many conflicts world-wide.

It would be a disservice to recommend this book either to undergraduates or those in their early postgraduate years but only on grounds of cost. However, any individual charged with contributing to the care of a traumatic brain injured patient must be able to access a copy by day or by night. No one working with patients who have suffered traumatic brain injury should be left unaware about the existence and content of this textbook.

Such is the value within its pages that, in the past, a copy would only have survived on a departmental bookshelf if anchored by a stout chain. Nowadays, an electronic tag might be more appropriate; alternatively, all of the contents could be accessed on a departmental computer or local intranet.

Medical Statistics: A Guide to Data Analysis and Critical Appraisal

JENNIFER PEAT, BELINDA BARTON

EXTENT P/H	336 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£29.50 0727918125
PUBLISHER	Blackwell (Oxford), 2005
REVIEWER	Jim Lewsey
STAR RATING	****

This basic medical statistics book aims to, in the authors' own words, 'provide the 'know how' and make statistics analysis and critical appraisal easy for all researchers and health-care professionals'. I don't think medical statistics is easy even for medical statisticians but this book is certainly a useful addition to the field.

The two main strengths of this book are the chapter-specific notes for critical appraisal and the time devoted to explaining the assumptions of statistical testing. These two

related topics are usually not considered in other books (or only to a limited degree) yet are important factors for improving the quality of statistics in medical research.

Users of the statistical software SPSS will get the most out of this book as it includes the commands for carrying out the statistical tests but I would not hesitate in recommending it to users of other software as well. However, I felt that more emphasis on encouraging researchers to save files of the underlying syntax should have been given. The advantages of such are that an exact record of what analyses were done is documented and that new or updated analyses can be done at the press of a button. Although the authors introduce the 'paste' command in chapter 1, they do not provide a more detailed example of its use in the remainder of the book. It might have been useful to write 'click OK or paste' rather than just 'click OK' in the boxes of SPSS commands that are found throughout the book.

The book has good coverage as it includes *t*-tests (and their non-parametric equivalents), chi-squared tests, analysis of variance, regression (linear and logistic), tests of agreement, diagnostic tests and Kaplan-Meier survival analysis.

Chapter 1 is devoted to data management; the authors are to be congratulated for this as it is a subject not often addressed yet many medical researchers collect and record data in a sloppy manner resulting in data sets not primed for statistical analysis. The standard error is a notoriously difficult concept to get across when introducing statistical testing (chapters 3 and 4). To this end, I think these chapters ought to have included sampling distributions. A positive point is that these chapters detail the difference between statistical and clinical significance; many clinicians make the mistake of declaring that a statistically significant result indicates an important finding.

Chapters 5 and 6 are excellent introductions to methods for continuous outcome variables with good sections on post-hoc tests, collinearity, interactions and model building. Measuring repeatability and the utility of diagnostic tests, for both categorical and continuous variables, are the subject matter of chapters 9 and 10. The inclusion of both topics is most welcome as they are important and not always covered in basic medical statistics books. These chapters also contain a useful general point that *P*-values sometimes have little meaning even though statistical software automatically churns them out.

I also enjoyed the quotations that start each chapter, the clearly presented and labelled tables and figures, and the glossary of terms. In conclusion, a very good book.