and visual systems. Section 3 focuses on the motor systems, again considering the anatomy, physiology and practical aspects of spinal motor and brainstem motor systems. Section 4 deals with the peripheral nerves.

While in no way diminishing the wealth of information laid out in these sections, which perhaps has greater appeal to the physiologist, it is the last two that will be of greatest interest to the practising neurosurgeon in the UK. Section 5 considers how intra-operative recordings may assist the surgeon during the operation. Invaluable advice is offered on the localisation of displaced cranial motor nerves, mapping of sensory nerves, spinal cord, floor of the fourth ventricle and how to identify the central sulcus. Professor Møller's considerable experience with microvascular decompression of the facial nerve in hemifacial spasm makes absorbing reading. The final section considers the very practical aspects of electrophysiological recording in the operating theatre and concludes with a very honest objective evaluation of its benefits.

The book is well written and nicely laid out, supported by clear line drawings, a helpful bibliography and comprehensive index. It is a book to dip into rather than read from cover to cover and information is easy to find within.

The dearth of neurophysiologists and small number of neurosurgeons in the UK mean that both specialists tend to remain absorbed in their own workload and woefully ignorant of each other's knowledge and abilities. This book seeks to remedy this, encouraging a closer union from which will flow the common goal: safer surgery and better results.

At present, only a small proportion of neurosurgical procedures involve intra-operative monitoring and in proportion this book will have limited appeal, mainly to the minority of surgeons with a particular interest in functional, skull base and scoliosis surgery. Nevertheless, it is a stimulating read and there should be a copy in every neurosurgical unit in the land.

Learning Surgery: The Surgery Clerkship Manual

STEPHEN LOWRY

EXTENT P/H	798 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£33.00 0387225838
PUBLISHER	Springer (Berlin), 2005
REVIEWER	Brian Rees
STAR RATING	**

This is a well-presented volume. There is a very good presentation of each chapter with objectives at the beginning and a clear summary at the end. It is nice that there are case presentations at the beginning of each chapter to introduce the chapter topic – a useful method that keeps the reader interested. There is frequent use of diagrams and flow charts to convey management plans. There were several interesting chapters, particularly one on bioethical principles and survival skills of doctors, which is interesting and a welcome break from all the theory.

However, there were points which would not appeal to the British trainee surgeon: first, American abbreviations and different units for blood results, making it difficult and tedious to follow at times. Second, there was not enough information on the management of surgical pathology compared to the background given for each disease.

It is my opinion that, despite its layout, it is very American in its approach and I do not think it will have a large market within the UK. It is a book to be referred to and not one that would be necessary as a part of the surgical bookshelf.

e-Letters – new additions

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Since the last issue of the Annals, the following letters have been published on our website
<<http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/publications/eletters/>>:

Teaching and assessing surgical competence – 2 responses

Prospective analysis of scrotal pathology referrals - are referrals appropriate and accurate? – 1 response