is no consistency in the presentation of the figures, style varying from chapter to chapter and the photographs are of equivocal quality. The order of the chapters is also unusual in that discectomy is covered in chapters 4, 9 and 19.

The techniques pioneered by Dr Kambin and described in this book were developed in the 1980s; however, very little evidence is presented for the efficacy of the techniques described. The additional material of newer techniques is of interest but is not comprehensively covered, nor is there clear indication of what the role of these techniques should be to the modern-day practising spinal surgeon. A strength of this book is the description of percutaneous transpedicular approaches and minimally invasive techniques in pain management for the spine surgeon as these topics are often less than optimally covered in other texts.

The book is accompanied with a CD that shows video footage of Dr Kambin performing the techniques described in the book for lumbar discectomy and segmental instrumented fusion. The striking feature is of the high level of surgical skill that is required to perform the surgery and the huge complement of specialist instrumentation that is required.

This is a book of interest to the enthusiast for percutaneous spinal surgery; however, little evidence is presented for the efficacy for the techniques described and advocated. It needs to be included in any comprehensive library of spinal surgery for reference but it is probably not a necessity for the practising spinal surgeon or resident.

Oesophagogastric Surgery (3rd edn)

MICHAEL GRIFFIN, SIMON RAIMES

EXTENT P/H	435 pages, Hardback
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REVIEWER	Tim Wheatley
STAR RATING	***

Many surgeons will already be familiar with the *Companion to Specialist Surgical Practice* series of books and the publishing of the third edition this year is a welcome revision of this popular and useful resource. The *Oesophagogastric Surgery* book at last has its correct title (changed from *Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery* in the previous two editions) and is aimed at surgeons in higher training and practising consultants in keeping with the overall aim of the series. The editors have added to the existing list of contributors, the majority of whom are established experts in the current management of oesophageal and gastric conditions to provide up-to-date evidence-based information on both benign and malignant disease.

There are three completely new chapters in this third edition that cover the management of early oesophagogastric

cancers, gastrointestinal stromal tumours and motility disorders. Comprehensive literature reviews on the first two topics provide an excellent summary of current management including areas of controversy and uncertainty, and highlight these two areas of increasing interest. The difficult and often marginalised subject of motility disorders is approached clearly with very practical suggestions albeit in the shortest chapter of the book; though some of the detail regarding definitive procedures (present in other chapters) is lacking.

The other 15 chapters have been revised and rewritten in varying degrees to ensure their subject matter is as up-to-date and relevant as possible. Some topics, such as the treatment of complications of previous upper GI surgery, have changed little since the second edition was published in 2001 and this chapter has received only cosmetic alterations. In other areas, such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy in treatment of oesophageal and gastric cancer and the surgical management of morbid obesity, there have been important advances that are incorporated into the new text to represent current practice.

All of the chapters are easy to read and address their subject matter comprehensively. In addition, the new style of double-column pages, clearer headings and subheadings, and generally smarter tables is more user-friendly than before. The addition of a 'Key Points' summary at the end of each chapter is excellent, and provides a good summary. The *Companion* series stresses the importance of evidence-based practice and this book uses extensive referencing throughout to support points that are discussed. Important references are highlighted in the main text with a 'scalpel code' which is very helpful for those interested in key papers and the long list of references at the end of each chapter will provide a useful resource for those looking for even more reading. Some of the black-and-white photographs have been reproduced in colour in the middle of the book but these are not clearly indexed to the original text and it is a shame that more colour could not have been used throughout.

A new feature for the *Companion* series is the link to an e-learning website designed for trainees to perform self-assessment. The site is easy to access, free of charge and provides basic and advanced levels of assessment in an intuitive format. At the time of review there were only the oesophagogastric assessments available but these appeared useful and I suspect will see heavy use immediately prior to examinations.

I like the *Companion* series of books, and this particular book achieves its aims in an excellent fashion. General surgical trainees will find more than they need to know about oesophagogastric surgery here, while oesophagogastric trainees and consultant surgeons can rely on it as a good knowledge base. By bridging the gap between more basic general textbooks and large 'reference' texts, this book has a niche and by regular updates it remains relevant. I would recommend it to all who have an interest in the specialty.