BOOK REVIEWS

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Female Urology

HOWARD B GOLDMAN, SANDIP P VASAVADA

EXTENT P/H	438 pages, Hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£107.50 1588297012
PUBLISHER	Humana (Towota, NJ), 2007
REVIEWER	Ling Lee
STAR RATING	****

The aim of this book is to discuss the newer management of the three common conditions that female patients present to urogynaecologists, namely: stress urinary incontinence, overactive bladder symptoms and pelvic floor prolapse. The book finishes with 18 case studies and comments by experts.

Part 1, 'Evaluation', which has five chapters, starts with the anatomy of the pelvis. There is an excellent chapter on the neurophysiological control of the lower urinary tract that covers the influence of the higher centres on bladder function and the complexity of the actions of muscarinic and purigenic bladder receptors in normal and diseased states. The office and urodynamic evaluation of urinary incontinence is covered in the following three chapters. It would perhaps have been beneficial to include a chapter here on the various validated condition-specific and quality-of-life questionnaires for assessing women with urinary incontinence and prolapse.

Part 2, 'Treatment', makes up the bulk of the book. It starts with conservative management of incontinence and is then divided into four subsections, which discuss the non-surgical and surgical treatments on stress urinary incontinence, the overactive bladder, prolapse and fistulas/urethral diverticula. While these chapters are well researched, I was disappointed that in the chapter on mid-urethral slings the authors have quoted only two comparative studies between laparoscopic Burch colposuspension and tension-free vaginal tapes to support the sweeping change in practice from retropubic suspension to slings as the first-line surgical procedure for stress incontinence.

The discussion on oral and intravesical therapies for the overactive bladder is excellent. The literature and description on the application of botulinum toxin, neuromodulation and augmentation cystoplasty for bladder overactivity are covered in the following four chapters. In the chapter on the treatment of mixed urinary incontinence, the authors present the literature on the impact of surgery on these patients with urinary symptoms that are difficult to treat.

A formal description on the various grading systems of prolapse would have been useful in the section on the evaluation of pelvic floor prolapses.

The authors include 18 different case studies on common, yet tricky, problems faced by urogynaecologists such

as chronic pelvic pain syndromes, *de novo* or persistent incontinence/prolapse following surgery, and voiding dysfunction in the normal and neurological patient. They serve as a good platform for the reader on which to exercise diagnostic skills and to compare them to the experts' or the editors' comments. The quality of discussion varies from evidence-based answers to an algorithm of management plan.

This book achieves its aim by bringing to the reader a current view on the evaluation and treatment of urinary incontinence and prolapse. It is a concise overview on the common urogynaecological conditions and provides useful evidence to support practice as well as filling in gaps of knowledge in the less familiar areas of practice in the field of female urology.

Better Physician Writing and Speaking Skills

JOHN GARTLAND

EXTENT P/H	120 pages, Paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£19.95 1846191742
PUBLISHER	Radcliffe (Abingdon), 2007
REVIEWER	Bob Greateorex
STAR RATING	*

This 118-page paperback carries a title that is extremely relevant to today's undergraduate and postgraduate medical trainees. We live in an era when aspiring doctors and postgraduate trainees must concentrate on sciences from an early stage of their education. As a consequence, skills in the use of both written and spoken language are less well developed and the result is that the communication skills of doctors have become an issue for both patients and the profession. The book therefore carries an expectation that it will provide much-needed instruction in the art of good communication.

It is clearly written for an American market and there is occasional use of words that would be unfamiliar, though understandable, to a UK audience. It has chapters covering writing and speaking skills, communication skills, technical writing, writing for publication, conference presentation, grant applications and interpersonal skills. There is no doubt that each area is one in which young trainees often need guidance in the early stages of their careers.

The chapter content is occasionally confused, such that under the chapter headed 'Good Physician Writing is a Communication Skill' the author wanders into a discussion of verbal communication and body language. The author also advocates the avoidance of technical jargon but actually uses jargon that will lead to confusion among those unfamiliar with the finer points of English grammar.

The chapters on preparing to write, writing for publication and grant writing contain useful advice but, overall, the book fails to live up to the promise suggested by the title. There is repetition that gives the impression that the book is a collection of published papers thrown together, rather than a carefully edited combination of previous articles. Sadly, because of the verbose and repetitive nature of the text, the book is unlikely to hold the reader's attention long enough to convey the important messages contained within.

Developing the Wise Doctor: A Resource for Trainers and Trainees in MMC

D FISH, L DE COSSART

EXTENT P/H	221 pages, Paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£34.95 9781853156182
PUBLISHER	RSM Press (London), 2007
REVIEWER	Mohan Kumar
STAR RATING	****

It is always refreshing to see new viewpoints on the nature and function of medical teaching, such as those advanced in this book. The last few years have seen tremendous changes to postgraduate medical teaching and assessment. While most of these represent good intentions we have to share Fish and de Cossart's nervousness that some changes are overwhelmingly managerial and are at risk of missing the complexity of medical learning. They tell us how, by casual introduction of the new assessment mechanisms and 'Tools of the Trade', we are at risk of missing the forest for the trees.

Fish and de Cossart offer solutions that are coherent and practical, that help build on the new system rather than abandon it. In this thought-provoking work based on their own research, Fish and de Cossart lay out a clear and coherent discourse on the nature of postgraduate teaching and learning. They also dig deep into a wealth of resources already available on the issues of teaching and learning, curriculum and professional development, and the themes of narratives and humanities in the practice of medicine.

Intended for postgraduate doctors involved in teaching and learning in a clinical setting, this paperback is divided into two themes: part one helps to diagnose the 'disease' in postgraduate medical education and part two systematically offers up a cure for its ills.

The authors succinctly capture a summary of elements of clinical practice that can be developed and recorded, the standards that might be aimed for and the ability of current available processes to explore and document them. In doing so, they come up with the overview of what they call the 'invisibles': those elements of practice such as personal

qualities, professional judgements, complex decision-making, values and attitudes that are not immediately visible to the clinical supervisor. The authors offer memorable heuristics and resource-based learning that help unravel the invisibles in the bulk of the book.

The ideas presented herein will be the glue that sticks together the fragmented 'Tools of the Trade' to produce a richer, multidimensional teaching and assessment package. This book will be of enormous benefit for teaching and supervision and should be essential reading for anyone engaged in postgraduate medicine as learner, teacher or manager.

Recent Advances in Surgery 30

IRVING TAYLOR, COLIN JOHNSON

EXTENT P/H	200 pages, Paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£35.00 9781853157202
PUBLISHER	RSM Press (London), 2007
REVIEWER	Alexander Blackmore, Madu Onwudike
STAR RATING	****

The *Recent Advances in Surgery* series, edited once more by Irving Taylor and Colin Johnson, has now reached its 30th edition and will be familiar to many surgical trainees and consultants. In recent years, the series has been published annually and the book consists of sections dedicated to some of the subspecialties within general surgery; a section entitled 'Surgery in General', which pertains to topics relevant to all practitioners of surgery; and finally a chapter reviewing recent randomised clinical trials. This edition includes sections dedicated to breast, gastrointestinal and vascular surgery. Contributors include both surgical trainees and leading consultants in their respective fields, including a number from overseas and those in other specialties where their expertise relates to the topic under consideration.

The information in the individual chapters is presented in a concise and readable format, with useful summary boxes containing key points. Relevant photographs, imaging and other illustrations are presented, with colour plates included in the section on vascular surgery.

The 'Surgery in General' section contains a thought-provoking chapter on risk management and, among other things, examines how this issue is addressed in a more systematic way by anaesthetists and the airline industry. The chapter on the surgical significance of MRSA is topical but consists largely of personal opinion and lacks a firm evidence-base. We were disappointed with the emphasis given to the role of medical staff's clothing in the dissemination of MRSA while neglecting significance of high bed-occupancy rates prevalent in many NHS institutions.