
Book Reviews

Critiques de livres

CANCER TREATMENT. 4th edition. Edited by Charles M. Haskell. Section editor for gynecologic neoplasms: Jonathan S. Berek. 1229 pp. Illust. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia; Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd., Toronto. 1995. \$216. ISBN 0-7216-4907-6

This book represents the work of 127 distinguished contributors; however, 85 of them are from either the University of California (Los Angeles) or from the California area, giving the book a somewhat "provincial" flavour. At 1229 pages, the book is short for an oncology textbook. Nevertheless it addresses the needs of medical students, general physicians and surgeons in an organized fashion. Although in many ways it is more readable than many oncology texts, it lacks some of the depth necessary for a medical or surgical oncologist. Certain areas of basic science, such as the principles of cell kinetics, molecular biology and carcinogenesis, are ignored.

The book is well organized in two parts. The first includes several oncology topics within four sections, whereas the second, which makes up the majority of the text, is divided into 15 sections. These discuss all the different tumour types well, although some of the depth and controversy surrounding their management is lacking.

The treatment chapters are succinct, well written and well referenced. The figures and flow charts are well prepared and enhance the reader's ability to understand the topics.

Despite my concerns regarding the book's length, it delivers a focused and user-friendly approach to cancer treatment. It represents an excellent reference for the medical stu-

dent, family physician and general surgeon.

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EFFECTIVE WRITING: A GUIDE FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS. Louise Bell. 400 pp. Copp Clark Ltd., Toronto. 1995. \$28.95. ISBN 0-7730-5419-7

Writing, like surgery, is fun. It is also a craft whose rules must be learned. Louise Bell has written an excellent, comprehensive book designed to help the health professional reach the public through the written word effectively, without being confusing or boring. The book is long and the style compact, making it difficult to read from cover to cover. Do not despair. It is a valuable resource.

In 13 chapters, Ms. Bell deals with research papers, review articles, abstracts, newsletters, book chapters, pamphlets and announcements for professional and lay people. She covers the nuts and bolts of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity and style and outlines common writing problems, such as the dreaded "writer's block." A chapter on the use of tables, figures and other types of illustration will help the writer clarify the text and even shorten it!

An annotated bibliography and other documentation are treated in detail, as well as the requirements for submitting manuscripts to biomedical journals. Chapters on working with publishers and editors and on ethical considerations for authors are essential reading.

"Fast Track" notes at the end of

each chapter encapsulate the main points. These are not, however, a substitute for reading the chapter! A good table of contents, subdivision of chapters, notes in the page margins and nine pages of index enable the reader to find specific points easily.

Good writing is a dying art, so people say. Yet it need not be. Before you sit down to write your next article for this journal, or a letter to the editor, browse through Louise Bell's book and read the appropriate chapters. Follow her guidelines. They may not inspire you but they will improve your effectiveness.

When you have read the book come back to this review and calculate the review's "SMOG readability formula." What's that? Ah! Read Louise Bell's book!

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ORBITAL FRACTURES: DIAGNOSIS, OPERATIVE TREATMENT, SECONDARY CORRECTIONS. Beat Hammer. 100 pp. Illust. Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, Kirkland, Wash.; Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, Toronto. 1995. \$167 US. ISBN 0-88937-139-3

This concise, well-illustrated text focuses on the management of orbital fractures and post-traumatic orbital deformities. It describes the author's approach to the management of orbital trauma, based on an experience of 500 cases managed over 5 years. The diagnosis and surgical indications for each fracture pattern are discussed, and the author's preferred method of treatment is described sys-

tematically. The illustrations are outstanding. They include flow charts detailing management protocols, appropriate computed tomography scans and clinical figures illustrating all the important clinical scenarios. Line drawings effectively summarize the specific orbital reconstruction under various circumstances.

The section dealing with the management of acute trauma begins with a chapter describing the author's database of 448 patients with orbital fractures treated between 1988 and 1992, with a minimum follow-up of 6 months. A critical analysis of the results and complications provides the foundation for the subsequent presentation of surgical indications. The section on orbital cavity reconstruction is excellent.

The second segment of the book focuses on secondary corrections of established post-traumatic orbital deformities. This segment again begins with a critical analysis of a database, but this time limited to 26 patients treated over 5 years. Post-traumatic reconstruction is discussed in cursory fashion only. The details of clinical and radiologic assessment, the indications and sequencing of surgical repair and the specifics of surgical options are not described in sufficient detail.

The specific indications and techniques of all modalities available for the treatment of enophthalmos and orbital dystopia are not described in sufficient detail. The various soft-tissue procedures used to address the supratarsal fold deformity, ectropion and canthal dystopias are not described.

Although useful as a handbook on the management of acute orbital trauma, this text does not serve as an exhaustive or comprehensive reference on the subject. The author's preferred

technique of orbital exposure, for example, is extremely well presented, but the advantages and disadvantages of other techniques, such as the transconjunctival incision, are not mentioned. The principles of orbital cavity reconstruction, using the author's preferred autogenous and alloplastic materials, are extremely well described, but again there is no discussion of other materials.

This text is recommended as a practical guide to the management of orbital trauma and provides a valuable reference for plastic surgeons, ophthalmologists and otolaryngologists dealing with these fractures.

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SURGERY FOR MALE INFERTILITY. Marc Goldstein. 328 pp. Illust. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia; W.B. Saunders Company, Canada Ltd., Toronto. 1995. \$109. ISBN 0-7216-6693-0

This book reviews state-of-the-art techniques for the management of surgical problems in male infertility. Although its style is such that it could be read and understood by the general medical community, it is really written for urologists and for physicians with a particular interest in clinical male infertility.

Readers are provided with the most complete and extensive overview of the surgical management of this problem yet published. Each chapter is organized around a topic. The indications for each procedure, the methods (including extremely useful photographs and diagrams) and results are carefully presented.

The initial chapters review the male reproductive tract, surgical anatomy and diagnostic procedures used to identify abnormalities. The sections on the findings of testicular biopsy and of vasography are particularly informative. Little emphasis is given to the use of scrotal and transrectal ultrasonography, although these diagnostic methods are now routinely used to delineate anatomic abnormalities. I hope that the next edition will include more on these procedures.

The following chapters detail the indications, techniques and results of surgery on the vas deferens, epididymis, varicoceles, hydroceles and prostate. These exhaustive (but not exhausting) reviews present all the currently acceptable surgical options and the outcome for each procedure. The description of each procedure is clear and concise and is accompanied by useful illustrations. Surgical "pearls" developed through the years of experience are liberally peppered through the text.

Finally, the book ends with a section that makes suggestions for microsurgical equipment and training required. For someone starting up a microsurgical centre this is an extremely useful section.

Dr. Goldstein's greatest contribution is the development of a book that gives a comprehensive review of outcome analysis for all the surgical procedures related to male infertility. Clearly written with interesting, useful illustrations, I found this book a joy to read. All andrologists and urology residents will find it useful.

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