Book reviews


This excellent, two-volume text clearly fulfils its purpose. It specifically excludes fractures and paediatric problems as the authors consider them to be ‘well covered in other sources’. It recognises that degenerative disease and arthroplasty form a sizeable part of a typical orthopaedic surgeon’s workload, and accordingly, devote the whole second volume to this topic. The book is particularly strong on the basic sciences with extensive chapters on the development, anatomy and biomechanics of the knee.

Recent advances in the biology of synovium, meniscal healing, transplantation, articular cartilage grafting and tissue engineering are covered in some depth. Various techniques are described in great detail with superb photographs and illustrations. I am particularly impressed with the chapters covering arthroscopic surgery to the menisci, ligaments and articular cartilage. The volume on arthroplasty is wide-ranging with chapters by internationally recognised experts setting out the definitive management of primary and revision knee surgery, and the myriad complications that are sent to test us.

It is difficult to criticise such a book, but a few points can be mentioned. The authors obviously have their own preferred procedures, but some areas are ‘light’; the patella-tendon ACL repair is beautifully described and illustrated, but the equally popular hamstring techniques are noted only briefly. Conditions described as chronic patellar pain, malalignment and instability plague our knee clinics, but are addressed in chapters which are only a few pages long. Some of the basic anatomical diagrams are unclear when compared with the quality of the illustrations of surgical anatomy.

I agree with the authors that this is a book for orthopaedic surgeons and trainees and it would be a valuable addition to any personal or departmental library. Some topics obviously cannot be covered in sufficient depth to make this a definitive text for a specialist knee surgeon. In these days of rapidly changing ideas, it seems impossible that such a text could exist in its present multi-volume format. Increasingly, we rely upon the most recent of publications, the internet and specialist meetings for our information. It is a real tribute to the authors that such an important text has been produced and it is a pleasure to read. It provides useful information to give the novice a clear understanding of the procedure, including the indications, alternatives and complications. This book fulfils these essential criteria. There are excellent illustrations – a combination of line diagrams, intra-operative photographs and radiographs – which make one aware of what is happening.

The editor has ensured that the contributors have introduced a personal note into the description of complications and how to deal with them. All the common procedures for elective surgery and trauma, from treatment of the humble ingrown toenail to ankle arthroscopy and calcaneal fractures, are covered. The book has been well produced and it is a pleasure to read. It provides useful preliminary reading for surgeons with limited operative experience and may stimulate mature surgeons to modify their techniques. I have no doubt that the late Ken Johnson, the first editor, would approve this new edition.

Peter Earnshaw


This neat little book (A5 size) is most useful primer to introduce the curious to the difficulties of allogeneic transplantation. It is interesting how mature so many of the references are (Urist, Burwell, Mankin), but with newer contributors mainly from the Western Pacific. This is clearly an area for pure scientific research which has been weighed down by the dangers of disease transmission.

Michael Lawrence


The purpose of a textbook of operative surgery is to provide sufficient information to give the novice a clear understanding of the procedure, including the indications, alternatives and complications. This book fulfils these essential criteria. There are excellent illustrations – a combination of line diagrams, intra-operative photographs and radiographs – which make one aware of what is happening.

Leslie Klenerman


This is a multi-author publication that provides a mixture of the most basic and quite sophisticated, advice to new and established research workers in musculoskeletal surgery. Much of the volume is related to laboratory and animal experimentation. Cadaver and human involvement in research is also included and there is a useful section on planning research.

Neil Rushton


If there is any doubt as to whether or not sports medicine is an established subspeciality, these two tomes will dispel it. The cover-
age is encyclopaedic in its breadth and detail. The relevant basic science and related areas of sports medicine such as nutrition, heat illness, sports psychology and virus diseases and their effect on fitness are included. In the section on surgical principles, there is even a chapter on the use and abuse of tourniquets, a neglected topic. The whole subject is covered on a regional, anatomical basis and includes head injuries. Disabled athletes, children and female athletes have separate chapters.

I tried hard, but failed to think of any related subjects that have been overlooked. So much information in two heavy volumes is difficult to handle both mentally and physically. I would suggest that, in future, the publishers consider producing three or four smaller volumes. Perhaps there is a place for a synopsis of each major topic so that one can consult a separate, slim book for an overview of a topic, rather than being inundated with details. This could be particularly useful for the beginner. It has been done successfully with Encyclopaedia Britannica which is in two sections, the Propaedia and Macropaedia and also for Arnold Toynbee’s, A Study of History (10 volumes). This book is destined to become a standard work on a par with Campbell’s Orthopaedics and will be essential for every medical library.

Leslie Klenerman