

Ophthalmology: Examination Techniques, Questions and Answers

D.C. Broadway, A. Tufail and P.T. Khaw
Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 1999,
£49.50, ISBN 0 7506 2500 7

The aim of this book as stated by the authors in their introduction is to assist exam-going candidates. Many books exist that help in the preparation for the MCQ component of the examination. However, a book like this concentrating on the examination techniques and the commonly asked questions directs the trainee to prepare adequately for the examination. Coming face to face with an examiner is an essential part of the examination structure. Adequate preparation should help a trainee face an examiner confidently. This book, I believe, should be helpful in achieving that aim.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with the techniques of examination through eleven well-constructed chapters. Beginning with the simple tests, the authors move on to more detailed examination techniques. They also include an appropriate discussion on the differential diagnosis and important clinical features. The added attraction is the checklist at the end of each chapter, which acts as a summary.

The second section deals with the various clinical conditions that one would come across in an examination, either as a clinical case or as part of an oral examination. The authors have concentrated their efforts in making this book appropriate for the purpose. The coverage is excellent, adequately supported by good-quality colour illustrations. The question-and-answer format, although unconventional, serves the purpose of the book very well.

In the last section, the authors stimulate the candidates to prepare for the examination by listing the various associations of ocular disorders with other organ system disorders. The coverage is exhaustive, bringing the candidate's attention to potential areas of discussion in an examination.

This book is an excellent source of information that would make a candidate comfortable on the eve of an oral or clinical examination. The organisation of the text makes it easy to obtain the necessary information quickly. Although aimed at exam-going candidates this book can serve well even those senior house officers who are in

their initial year of training. The book should find its way to the bookcase of every exam-going candidate. Mr Broadway and his co-authors should be congratulated on their effort.

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Macular Hole: Pathogenesis, Diagnosis and Treatment

Steven A. Medreperla and Brooks W. McCuen II
Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 1999,
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An excellent monograph, and the first one on this topic, this book is edited by Steve Madreperla and Brooks McCuen, who have both published extensively on the subject of macular hole. The book has a foreword by Dr Don Gass, who is widely credited with describing the early fundus changes in impending macular holes, and is dedicated to Dr Richard Green, Professor of Ophthalmic Pathology at the Wilmer Eye Institute, with the words 'for teaching us all the importance of clinicopathologic correlation in understanding the pathogenesis of ocular disease'. Having learned from Dr Green, during my fellowship at the Wilmer Institute, I can vouch for the fact that he is probably the finest teacher of ophthalmic pathology alive. He taught us not only the science of pathology but also its art!

Since the first description of macular hole repair by Kelly and Wendel in 1989, its management has accelerated rapidly due to enhanced knowledge of pathophysiology, gained from vitreoretinal surgery and from post-mortem examinations. Several of the 17 contributors to this text have made original contributions to our understanding of the pathogenesis of macular hole and its management, and this book benefits greatly from this wealth of knowledge. Tight editorial discipline has ensured that all chapters are of the highest standard, each chapter being comprehensively referenced. There is a common theme of building all discussion on a solid foundation of basic pathology. This reflects the influence of Dr Green has had on the editors.

Clearly a book such as this can not detail surgical techniques and list all milestones in the treatment of macular holes; however, it strikes a healthy balance between giving enough history to excite interest and succinct

presentation of current 'state of the art' to sustain interest throughout the book. The emphasis on fundamentals makes this book essential reading for all those who are likely to encounter macular holes in their clinical practice, from the resident through to the experienced macular surgeon. It will also be a welcome addition as a reference text in any library.

The only error I could find, and I am sure it is a typographical one, is in the first line of the second chapter. It characterises macular holes as 'absence of all layers of retinal tissue . . . at the fovea'. I am sure it is meant to read 'absence of all layers of *neuroretinal* tissue', as retinal pigment epithelium is actually present and forms the 'floor' of the hole.

The book aims to 'to bring the reader up to date on macular hole surgical techniques' and 'to enable this fund of knowledge to be used to critically evaluate future reports on macular hole surgery'. These objectives it achieves eminently.

It is an outstanding book and I recommend it very strongly. It is the closest one could come to having a personal tutorial from some of the clinicians contributing actively to our understanding of macular holes. I cannot help comparing this book to a good malt whisky from Scotland: distilled to perfection by experts and bottled after appropriate maturation to be enjoyed by all . . . but really cherished by the connoisseur.

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Kennerley Banke's Clinical Ophthalmology: A Text and Colour Atlas

Edited by G.G.W. Adams and A.D. Hubbard
Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 1999,
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This book provides a useful concise overview of ophthalmology to the non-ophthalmologist. The editors hope that the book will suit the needs of medical students, general practitioners, optometrists, orthoptists, casualty officers and those embarking on a career in ophthalmology. While there is insufficient detail for the career ophthalmologist, the book clearly achieves its aim of fulfilling the needs of the other groups targeted.