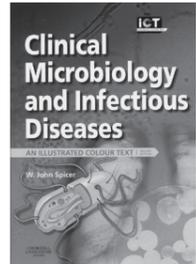


These titles are available from Elsevier Australia (www.elsevier.com.au) or your favourite university or medical bookshop.

Sophie Parker

Fourth year Medical Student
Dunedin School of Medicine
University of Otago

Sophie Parker is a 4th year medical student at Otago Medical School. She has a BSc in biochemistry and an interest in neuroscience research.



Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, 2nd Edition.
W. John Spicer.
Publisher: Churchill Livingstone.
2008.
NZRRP\$100

Many medical students fear Microbiology: whether it's recognising which microbes infect which tissues, how to recognise certain infections or simply learning a multitude of incomprehensible microbial names, it can be an arduous task to develop a working knowledge of this field. However, this book can change all that. Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases is a member of the Illustrated Colour Text (ICT) series, which contains over two dozen other titles aimed at medical courses. Using concise text supplemented with many colour photographs (both gross and histological), radiographs, diagrams and flow-charts, this book succeeds in making a complicated subject seem accessible and interesting. The second edition improves on the first edition in several ways. As well as updating information and microbial nomenclature in keeping with current knowledge, a section on virology has been added.

Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases is certainly not intended to be a comprehensive and detailed text. Instead, its clear content and design makes it a perfect introduction or revision aid. The book is split into five sections, which are colour coded for easy reference: Microbes, Microbial attack and control by intrinsic defences, Specific pathogens, Microbial attack succeeds: clinical infection, and Microbe control by extrinsic defences. Of the five sections, clinical infection is covered in most detail. Starting with

infections of the CNS, this section works its way down the body, covering organ systems such as the respiratory system, cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal system, urinary and reproductive systems. The other four sections cover characteristics of microbes, intrinsic host defences, specific pathogens and extrinsic defences. Within each section, all information on each topic is organised into double-page overviews, such as 'Staphylococci' or 'Biliary Infections'.

The author, Dr W John Spicer, is a senior consultant in Infectious Diseases and Microbiology at The Alfred Hospital, Australia. In the introduction he explains how he aimed to make the book useful 'in both developing and industrialised countries' by including information about tropical diseases and other diseases that may seem rare to a doctor in an industrialised country. He clearly has a passion for microbiology and delights in presenting gruesome photographs with captions such as, "Huge abscess on back with yellow pus, necrosis, ulceration and local spread.", so that this book is definitely not a dull read!

The key advantage of this book is its memorability. For example, each double-page overview includes a box containing essential bullet points that summarise the main points presented on the two pages – making flicking through a book as last minute exam revision possible! The abundance of colour figures and photographs also aid learning. One disadvantage would be the relative lack of antimicrobial drug information. In the few pages dedicated to specific antimicrobial drugs, general drug classes and mechanisms are succinctly discussed, but this section is clearly not the focus of the book. However, a 'Further Reading' section recognises the limited scope of the book by suggesting several textbooks to supplement the information presented.

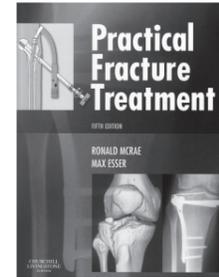
Overall, this book succeeds in presenting a wide range of information in an attractive and easy-to-remember fashion. With the time pressures placed on medical students, the amount of information that needs to be acquired sometimes seems overwhelming. Books like this are therefore a lifesaver for students in today's medical courses. I expect that, although aimed at undergraduate medical students, it could also be useful for clinical students and even practicing clinicians themselves.



Lynette MacGaughran

5th year Medical student
Waikato Clinical School
University of Auckland

Lynette is a 5th year Medical student at the Waikato Clinical School, Auckland University. She has completed an Applied Science degree prior to medical school. Lynette is a mother of two boys.



Today's Students, Tomorrow's Doctors
Kathy Feest and Karen Forbes
Publisher: Radcliffe Publishing
2007
RRP: \$71.00
The above title is available from Elsevier Australia (www.elsevier.com.au) or your medical bookstore

Today's students, tomorrow's doctors is a collection of short essays submitted as coursework by medical students in their final year at Bristol University. Each is a personal reflection of an experience had while shadowing the house officer whose job the student is to take over following final exams. Subject matter is diverse and includes turning up to the wards with a hang over; communication skills (or lack of them), coming to terms with death, and stepping up to the responsibility that comes with the title "doctor".

The authors state that the book is primarily aimed at medical educators

Sharon Tay

Fourth year Medical Student
Dunedin School of Medicine
University of Otago

Sharon enjoys studying Medicine, Law and Ethics at the University of Otago in Dunedin, in addition to pursuing diverse recreational interests. She aspires to practice the lost art of healing and recalls fondly her first exposure to Orthopaedic Surgery in Singapore



Practical Fracture Treatment, 5th edition
Ronald McRae and Max Esser
Publisher: Churchill Livingstone.
2008
RRP: \$99.00
The above title is available from Elsevier Australia (www.elsevier.com.au) or your medical bookstore

Written by orthopaedic surgeons, Practical Fracture Treatment offers sensible, step-by-step clinical strategies on dealing with fractures. With its fully updated artwork, this fifth edition builds on the strengths of earlier editions, delivering essential knowledge of the subject in a clear and concise manner. While recent methods of internal fixation to treat fractures are highlighted in this edition, the emphasis on conservative management remains central in the book.

Targeted at medical students, this 2 cm-thick reference book is arranged into two parts. The first part is an introductory section, comprising five chapters. This section assumes little prior knowledge of the subject and

with the hope that it will assist them in understanding the clinical experience for medical students, thus stimulating change and curriculum development. To this end the accounts are forthright and honest, and the consultants do not always shine.

This is not the sort of book you have to sit down and read from front to back, but rather lends itself to browsing. Four general themes are used to divide the book into sections: general reflections, relationships, working within the system, and death. An index containing terms such as 'breaking bad news' and 'night shift' further helps the reader to locate accounts of specific interest. The A5 size is a little large for the pocket but is readily carried in a small bag and, as each of the seventy 1-3 page anecdotes takes only a few minutes to read, this makes it ideal for a coffee break or keeping by the bed.

Although the experiences written of in this book were had in British hospitals, they appear to be directly comparable to the New Zealand experience, and a glossary assists with the translation of a few terms that may be unfamiliar to readers here; for example "cheese and onion" refers to the Oxford Handbook of Medicine. Furthermore, the situations described are common and likely to remain pertinent over time – this is not a book that will go stale on the shelf.

To me, reading this book was like lunch break during a campus teaching week – friends full of stories about their recent ward experiences. For those in the clinical years the anecdotes will be relatable but nothing new; for those earlier in their medical training it may be a useful preparation for the realities of life on the wards.

succinctly explains the basic principles of fractures and approaches to their management. The second part of the book is arranged by anatomical region, and comprises eleven chapters with comprehensive guidelines on handling specific fractures, depending on its location.

Practical Fracture Treatment may appeal to readers because of several distinctive features, including its concise writing style, reader-friendly layout and extensive artwork. In general, the key concepts are explained using a logical sequence of illustrations, with succinct captions corresponding to each clearly-labeled image. The artwork includes original drawings by McRae, radiographs, CT scans and 3-D reconstructions, which have been fully updated in the fifth edition. At the end of each chapter, you will find short self-test questions and concise answers with explanations.

The fifth edition includes revised clinical images, increased coverage of postoperative complications and new sections on 'damage control' orthopaedics, minimally invasive surgical techniques, MRSA, HIV/AIDS, and bone loss. New devices and techniques, including locked plate systems and the use of vacuum dressings in soft tissue management, have also been included.

My only gripe about this book is that the text is rather small throughout, and may cause eye strain when reading for long periods. However, this appears to be a trade-off with the compact size of the book.

Overall, the fifth edition of Practical Fracture Treatment appears to be very appealing in terms of layout and content. This text will be useful to medical students on the orthopaedics, emergency medicine, general surgery and trauma rotations. It would also serve as a handy reference guide for doctors on call in the plaster room, and the introductory section is a fantastic resource for anyone wishing to review the basics of fracture management.