# Book reviews

## *Advanced Training in Anaesthesia*

Edited by Jeremy Prout, Tanya Jones and Daniel Martin
Oxford University Press 2014
Price: £79.99
ISBN: 9780199609956

The comments on the back of *Advanced training in Anaesthesia* state that it 'contains everything candidates need in preparation for taking the Final FRCA exam'. This is a bold claim, but its 550 pages come closer than many to achieving this goal.

Edited by three London-based consultant anaesthetists, and with contributions from predominantly London-based trainees and consultants, the book begins with a section devoted to basic sciences, covering the various physiological systems with separate chapters on statistics, nutrition and physics and clinical measurement. Whilst under a 'basic science' banner, the chapters are clinically based (in line with the final FRCA exam) and include useful exam topics such as tables comparing the various types of cardiac output monitoring and an entire chapter devoted to critical illness scoring systems. This approach will undoubtedly save candidates from wasting valuable revision time trying to assimilate large amounts of information from multiple sources. Condensing large topics into a small number of pages requires an assumption of a reasonable level of basic knowledge in the reader, but in a book aimed at final FRCA candidates this does not seem unreasonable.

The second section of the book concentrates on clinical anaesthesia divided by surgical specialty. The chapters are clearly written with vivas in mind, with well-structured approaches to important clinical topics and frequent boxes in the text with recent recommendations and guidelines. Not all of the guidelines and definitions are current (for instance, the text includes definitions for ARDS and acute lung injury rather than the more recent Berlin definitions), and readers should bear this in mind when using the book for exam preparation.

Throughout the book there is a good mix of text, tables and illustrations, making it easy to read and identify key learning points. Most subjects are dealt with two A4 sides, making them digestible and easy to dip in and out of. It is ordered in a logical way with a comprehensive index, meaning little time is wasted trying to access specific contents.

In addition to its role in revision for postgraduate exams, the book is also a useful resource for clinical anaesthesia, and many post-fellowship trainees and consultants will find pearls of wisdom within its pages.

Does this contain 'everything candidates need for the final FRCA'? Probably not, but it about as close as I have seen a single book achieve.

**Wren Holdom**
Staff grade in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
Exeter UK

## *Regional Anaesthesia – A Pocket Guide*

Alwin Chuan and David Scott
Oxford University Press 2014
Price: £29.99
ISBN: 9780199684236

As an anaesthetic registrar, this book has been highly beneficial to me during solo lists, and also as a teaching aid in supervised lists.

Created by internationally known reputable authors, this book is well written and logically laid out. It provides a good basic introduction for novices to regional anaesthesia and ultrasound use. A comprehensive range of blocks is covered; during my regional anaesthesia module I have not yet discovered a block that is not featured. The landmark and ultrasound-guided approach is described for most blocks making the book applicable to high-, middle- and low-resource settings. The method for each block is described clearly, with a range of good-quality anatomical, landmark and ultrasound images to support the explanation. However, certain basic blocks (e.g. ilioinguinal iliohypogastric block) feature only the ultrasound guided approach; I

am not sure whether this is because the authors do not recommend using the landmark approach.

The book is conveniently sized to fit in a pocket, making it accessible for every day 'on the job' use.

Overall this book will be perfect for budding regional anaesthetists who are interested in developing their array of ultrasound guided blocks.

**Alexandra Hughes**
Specialist Trainee in Anaesthetics
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
Exeter UK