

An Introduction to Medical Statistics, 2nd edn (1995)

Author: J. Martin Bland

Publisher: Oxford University Press, Oxford

ISBN: 0-19-262428-8

Martin Bland's textbook is one of those most commonly recommended by academic medical statisticians in the UK for students and professionals in health-related disciplines. According to the *British Medical Journal* reviewer of the first edition, 'If you want to understand some of the statistical ideas important to medicine but fear being overwhelmed by mathematics you will welcome this book'. And it is certainly sufficiently explicit and prescriptive for those at the research stage of their careers. The second edition is rather longer than the first, in particular sections on multifactorial methods and determination of sample size have been greatly

expanded to form additional chapters. Each chapter includes several traditional multiple choice questions, and a longer question; a section at the back of the book gives full solutions to both. As in most other biostatistics texts, the clinical and epidemiological examples used are medical rather than dental, but do not presuppose specialized medical knowledge; the issues in dental specialties are fundamentally similar, and a dental reader should find the medical orientation no obstacle. The second edition is still good value at £14.95.

Robert G. Newcombe

The Clinical Anatomy of the Masticatory Apparatus and Peripharyngeal Space (1995)

Author: Johannes Lang

Publisher: Georg Thiem Verlag, Stuttgart

Price: DM 198.00, ISBN: 3-13-799101-3

This book contains a detailed and well-illustrated account of regional anatomy precisely as the title of the book indicates. This does however mean that structures such as fauces and epiglottis are not even listed in the index. There is nevertheless good coverage of the anatomical variations that can be found in the region specified by the title of the book, together with numerical data of the range of sizes and orientations of a variety of structures. There are also accounts of eponymous structure, both the names and the significance of which many readers may have forgotten (e.g. organ of Cheivitz). It is surprising therefore that while there is data on the variation in the length of the chorda tympani nerve, there is virtually no information to be found on the variation in the peripheral course of the lingual nerve; the cited references to the fibre constitution of the lingual nerve are also dated, they relate to the lingual nerve in the cat and more recent work on the human lingual nerve is omitted.

There is otherwise a useful collection of references although the non-linguist may be a little daunted by the fact that roughly half of them are in German. The book has also been translated from the German which may account for the occasional oddities. At one point the 'roof of the inferior alveolar canal' appears to be differentiated from its 'rostral wall'. At another point, two successive comments on the buccotemporal organ are firstly that it 'probably carries out endocrine functions' and then a few lines later that there is 'no evidence of neuro-endocrine activity'.

It is always possible to find fault with a book if one tries hard enough. The faults should however be set against the value of this book as a source of detailed information on the clinical anatomy of a prescribed area.

Allan Thexton