

molecular biological/immunohistochemical techniques and terminology before they embarked on reading it—especially to avoid drowning under the weight of acronyms (almost inevitable unfortunately these days!). Having said that, all developing clinicians must have some understanding of these subjects—they are fundamental to the advancement of clinical science and this book does bravely attempt to bridge the gap. However, the main problem is that the subject area is vast (particularly for one author and in such rapidly developing areas of research) and is aimed at comparatively disparate groups. Thus, for serious researchers some aspects will inevitably be out of date and/or be too superficially covered (e.g. the chapter on bone; details regarding integrins and their structure) whilst for undergraduates, the level of assumed knowledge is high and the amount of detail possibly too great—maybe even off putting—particularly when conflicting research findings are presented in already complex areas. Furthermore, whilst there is a fairly repetitive structure to each chapter (basic structure is followed by an

embryological/developmental overview before leading on to detailed discussion of the cellular components, their function, secretions etc.) some details lacked specific relevance. In addition, whilst it is an excellent idea to relate basic science to clinical practice, more exciting examples to ‘grab’ the reader could probably have been found, even if they do not directly impinge on ‘everyday’ clinical practice. For example, without going into science fiction overdrive, exciting developments in the knowledge base relating to tooth development (Sonic Hedgehog, Shh) or the aetiology of clefting could perhaps have been made rather more of whilst in the chapter on muscle, the potential implications of new work relating to facial form and muscle structure are perhaps underplayed.

Overall, this is a useful reference book although it may (to some readers) fall between two stools: for an undergraduate, its use needs to be thoughtfully directed whilst for the more serious researcher, it provides a useful starting point or overview.

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Treatment planning in primary dental care (2003)

Authors: Ann Shearer and Anthony Mellor

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This is quite a concise book that the authors state is aimed at final year undergraduate students in order to help them prepare cases for finals examinations. The initial sections are also useful for more junior students. The text is generally very up to date regarding several controversial issues, and gives an overview of a large amount of material and issues in restorative treatment planning. However there are a limited number of references and suggestions for further reading, and these are all grouped at the end of the book, rather than at the end of each chapter. This is especially an issue since the style of the text does assume that the reader has (or could have) carried out further study or reading in each specialised section and sometime makes references

to issues that could only be covered well in larger or more specialised texts. The clinical and scientific basis of the text is excellent and reflects current thinking and practice in primary care restorative dentistry, although some would argue with some comments regarding the timing and use of radiographs for the assessment and monitoring of caries and periodontal status.

This is therefore a good synopsis, bringing together many issues. The book still fulfils the aims of the authors well for a small volume and would be useful reading for those about half to two-thirds of the way through their undergraduate course to help bring together what may seem disparate subjects.

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