

Book reviews

A Synopsis of Minor Oral Surgery (1997)

George Dimitroulis

Publisher: Wright (Butterworth-Heinemann), Oxford

Price: £19.99

ISBN: 0-7236-1094-0

First impressions on picking up a new book are important. The cover diagram on this volume shows a three-sided flap to gain access to the roots of a lower molar, most people these days would be more likely to use a two-sided design.

When glancing through the contents page it good to see an opening chapter on the aspects of practice that need to be considered for oral surgery. However, subsequent chapters may be regarded as insufficient, especially to undergraduates, although somewhat basic for those in hospital practice, as the author leads the reader through chapters on anaesthesia, simple and surgical exodontia, etc.

The medically compromised patient is not considered until Chapter 15, perhaps combining

this with the medical history part of Chapter 2 would have been more logical.

Factual errors occur in several parts. Current UK recommendations regarding patients at risk from bacteraemia and drugs used for antibiotic prophylaxis are not followed.

The standard of the line diagrams varies from excellent to confusing, with many being recognizable (although not all are so credited) from Geoffrey Howe's book *Minor Oral Surgery*.

In short, this is a volume that is not sufficiently structured to aid undergraduate teaching but neither has enough detail to satisfy the hospital clinician or specialist practitioner.

Paul Sheppard

Dental Enamel 1997 (Ciba Foundation Symposium 205)

Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, Sussex, UK

Price: £55.00

ISBN: 0-471-96872-2

This impressive volume, the outcome of a symposium which brought together an international group of experts, is an excellent review of the present state of knowledge about dental enamel. Of course, anyone who has, at some time, struggled with the complexities of the development and structure of this tissue might not welcome another book about it, especially one that contains a good deal of the jargon of molecular biologists who seem to speak and write in acronyms. But dentists who do venture into this work will gain insights into some common clinical problems.

The first few chapters review the development

of teeth and the microstructure of enamel. We are then taken through the biochemistry of the mineral and organic components and shown evidence that the highly ordered crystallites might be arranged along some structural feature of the protein. A new character in the enamel story is introduced: this is 'tuftelin', an acidic protein which may be a nucleator and regulator of crystal growth.

Several chapters deal with developmentally defective enamel, the result of genetic or environmental conditions and it becomes obvious that when the techniques of biochemistry, molecular genetics and epidemiology are