There are however, some notable absences of real detail on ‘core’ cosmetic surgery procedures such as breast augmentation, rhinoplasty and abdominoplasty to name but a few. Although this is understandable considering that all three editors are Dermatologists and furthermore there is a dermatological bias amongst the chapter authors. Thus to name the book an ‘Atlas of Cosmetic Surgery’ and to claim that it is a “comprehensive and interdisciplinary textbook” in the preface is somewhat off the mark. Equally however, the chapters on the evaluation of the aging face, hair transplantation, leg vein management and scar management are a real treat and often omitted in other books of this nature.

Other criticisms of the book would include the fact that this particular speciality is advancing rapidly and some of the techniques described would be out of date by the time readers assimilate the information (but you have to start somewhere). The price could also be seen as a deterrent; however, it is a hardback printed in full colour with 479 illustrations, good paper quality and the price is also consistent with other books of this genre currently on the market.

Overall, this book provides some unique insights in particular areas of cosmetic surgery, but falls short of being a comprehensive review. Nevertheless, the inclusion of certain chapters not featured in other books of this nature makes it a worthwhile addition to the reference collection of the cosmetic surgeon or plastic surgical trainee.

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Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery

Alan D. McGregor and Ian A. McGregor, 2000 10th edition,
Published by Churchill Livingstone ISBN: 0-443-06372-9 Price £54.99 (Soft back), pp 221

Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery aims to deliver a concise text for trainees in this specialty. The first edition of the book was published in 1960 and since then the text has gone through a number of modifications and improvements. The book is divided into 2 parts: Basic Techniques and Surgical Applications. In ‘Basic Techniques’ the chapters include: wound management, the Z-plasty, free skin grafts, flaps and additional techniques. The chapter on wound management is particularly good and does well to set the scene for the rest of the book. In ‘Surgical Applications’ the chapters include; hypertrophic scars and keloids, radiation injury, pressure sore management, limb trauma, neoplastic conditions and hand surgery.

There is an obvious bias on limb reconstruction, and a similar level of detail is not applied when discussing breast reconstruction. This may be because the basic techniques can be more easily illustrated using the limbs. The entire book is written by the same group of authors and this helps to maintain a consistency of style and expression which can suffer in some multi-author books.

The chapters are certainly concise and describe each basic technique with precision and clarity. This helps to make the book easier to carry and this can be particularly useful reading for the trainee wherever they find themselves. There is little discussion and debate of the controversial issues and there is little mention of the latest techniques which are yet to be fully approved or accepted. There is little reference to the literature and most of the information is based on the clinical experience of the editorial team. This could lead to a bias in the description of what is the ‘standard technique’; however in a book of basic techniques such bias is easily avoided and not visible in any case. Furthermore, such limitation of the scope of the book is necessary considering the target market of the book (Plastic Surgery trainees) and also helps to focus the reader on the main points and keep the text light and fresh.

Criticisms of the book would include the black and white illustrations and photos – this can be a real problem in particular sections of the book where anatomical drawings are displayed and for a soft back at £54.99 one would expect there to be colour pictures. The price seems high but there are few alternatives currently on the market and this leaves trainees with little choice. However, there are plenty of illustrations and photos which complement the text. The 10th edition also saw the removal of the chapter on maxillofacial injuries. This could be viewed as a good or bad development, but it should be taken into account nonetheless.

Overall, this book is incredibly useful for the Plastic Surgery trainee in helping them to develop the basic knowledge they will need to accompany the clinical experience they gain on the wards and in theatre.

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The 10th edition of Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery provides a straightforward account of the principles and practice of the basic techniques of plastic and reconstructive surgery that every surgeon should know. The management, repair and reconstruction of defects and wounds using skin and other tissues are discussed in detail, and potential problems and complications are also reviewed. Complete coverage of all key plastic and reconstructive surgery techniques needed by all trainee surgeons. Outstanding illustrations support straightforward, step-by-step learning. Plastic surgery, which originated through the efforts of a small specialist group to hide facial blemishes and correct visible deformities, was applied with great success during World War II for the treatment of wounds in general. The revised edition of this textbook of surgical techniques gives an account of various types of plastic surgery, describing those methods which Plastic surgery, which originated through the efforts of a small specialist group to hide facial blemishes and correct visible deformities, was applied with great success during World War II for the treatment of wounds in general. Everyday low prices and free delivery on eligible orders. This is an ideal book for basic surgical trainees entering plastic surgery for first-hand experience of plastic surgery techniques or for trainees wishing to stay in the same specialty. It can be read over the weekend and provides the reader a wonderful insight into the basics of a fascinating branch of surgery. It would enable the basic surgical trainee to get the maximum out of the first 6 months in the specialty. Wound management, stitch craft, skin grafts and flaps are well covered.