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Oral anatomy, histology and embryology, 4th edition (2009)

Authors: B. K. B. Berkovitz, G. R. Holland and B. J. Moxham

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Any author who has written a book will be aware of the immense effort that has been applied to the production of this text. The authors have clearly achieved their goal; a text that can be readily used at all levels. They should be congratulated.

The book comprises 27 chapters over 398 pages and is extremely well laid out. Each chapter has numerous

illustrations all of high quality clearly demonstrating the particular point of each section. Each chapter leads, within the modern dental concepts of 'applied dental science' or better still oral biology, to link the clinical events with scientific facts at each level. In this way, the reader is close to the text of both aspects divided simply into structural

chapters. There is no need to spend hours with one finger bookmarking a specific section in a chapter on dentine while reading the relevant section on clinical implications. This is also readily demonstrated by the chapter on enamel; the 17 pages have over 70 illustrations which add significantly to our knowledge of enamel and link scientific data to clinical provision.

The book is organized in sections with normal anatomy discussed first and with the later chapters detailing the development of the tissues at the end of the book; in many textbooks, this is in the reverse order. However, for those who can remember our initial time in education describing what is normal and then detailing how we get there is a very refreshing, sound, and sensible way of commencing our education.

A minor criticism, and it is only that, is that some of the colour reproductions are a little over intense with an

imbalance of colours; it is an issue that is almost certainly out of the hands of the authors. The quality of the majority of images is such that it might have been appropriate to also provide a CD ROM.

My only other issue, again outside the control of the authors, is the quality of the paper. It is difficult to envisage the 'careful' postgraduate or undergraduate student keeping the book in a sufficiently good condition if it is well used.

I see no reason why this text should not be recommended to all dental students in training, all specialists, and all conscientious practitioners who actively strive to develop themselves and have clearly identified that a dental qualification is just the beginning of a long and rewarding journey.

Fraser McDonald

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