include a significant number of questions on physiology relating to the subject. Questions on anatomy are also included within this clinical sciences section.

As is stated in the preface, the level of difficulty of the questions does vary. Some are relatively basic, while others are particularly complex. As expected, American drug names, units of measurement, etc. are used but this does not overly distract the reader. What is particularly impressive is the high level of detail and information found in each of the answers. Each answer includes a reference to a major, up-to-date American textbook.

An index is included at the back of the book. I found the format of this index particularly frustrating when trying to review this book. Rather than the number referring to the actual question number, it refers, however, to the page number on which the answer relating to the topic can be found. The reader is then obliged to search through as many as seven or eight answers on that particular page before finding the answer related to the specific topic. The process appears to this reviewer to be unnecessarily laborious. Purchase of this book allows access to the online version. This unfortunately appears to use the same process as the index in the book itself. It is difficult to navigate your way to specific questions and can be particularly time-consuming.

As this book contains almost 1000 questions stems, any reader will undoubtedly gain experience of the SBA format. Owing to its layout however, I feel it is not necessarily well suited to the trainee sitting the Royal College examinations. Some questions are clearly appropriate for the primary candidate, others much more suited to the final fellowship candidate. As each part and each chapter includes such a range of questions, it is difficult for UK exam candidate trainees to focus on questions best suited to their own particular examination.

The book does have to be commended for the wealth of information it contains. The quality of the answers far exceeds what is found in most other MCQ or SBA books. By simply reading through each chapter, focusing on each question and answer together, it is possible for the reader to acquire a valuable degree of knowledge on a variety of topics.

On balance I could not unreservedly recommend this book. It is not a substitute for a standard comprehensive textbook, likewise a trainee might be best served by a more ‘user friendly’ MCQ/SBA examination book.

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Apart from the everyday experience of managing anaesthesia and perioperative care for diabetic patients, it is relatively uncommon for anaesthetists to be faced with uncontrolled endocrine diseases for perioperative management. This moderately sized hardback textbook aims to broaden anaesthetists’ understanding of pathophysiological conditions in endocrine disease and provide clinical guidelines in management.

A broad-ranging review of endocrine physiology and pathology is presented in Chapter 1. This includes discussion of the mechanism of action of hormones and the stress response to surgery. Given the growing importance of the stress response to surgery in understanding inflammatory and immune responses, and potentially on longer-term postoperative outcomes, I thought this section was somewhat disappointing, as it is limited to the effect of surgical and critical illness stress on endocrine glands (the hypothalamic–pituitary axis, the thyroid and gonadal axis, etc.).

Rather than commencing discussion of specific diseases with the most common, diabetes mellitus, the textbook presents pituitary diseases and management first in Chapter 2. Nonetheless, this chapter, and all others, offers clear tables and diagrams summarizing the hypophyseal hormones and their functions, clinical presentation of hypophyseal pathology, including visual field defects, and schematic diagrams of the organs affected by excess secretion of each single hormone. Between these visually attractive, memory-enhancing tables and figures though, are pages of dense text, with little by way of sub-paragraphing to encourage the reader. As the editor acknowledges in the preface, clinical guidelines throughout the text are based on level III evidence for the most part—expert opinion based on clinical experience—rather than hardcore level I or II evidence-based medicine from randomized trials and meta-analyses. Nevertheless, the boxes at the conclusion of each chapter summarize the key bullet points of management usefully and succinctly.

Chapter 3 deals with diabetes mellitus, which accounts for nearly 70% of all endocrine pathology, in one standard sized chapter. Happily, the concise style and lucid text, together with the use of schematic diagrams and tables as before, bring the reader through the biochemistry, classification, and consequences of the condition. The paragraphs on newer oral hypoglycaemics, including the incretins and amylin, are particularly informative. Despite a dearth of formal evidence-based medicine in this area, this chapter spells out a compelling rationale for striving to maintain normoglycaemia as far as possible perioperatively, emphasizing the immunological and long-term haematological benefits and the more immediate advantage of preventing destructive release of excessive free fatty acids, cytokines, and nitric oxide. The chapter concludes with a very good summary of the present literature on postoperative outcomes in diabetics, emphasizing the potential positive interventional role of the anaesthetist.

The chapter on thyroid disease, the second most common endocrine disorder, is embellished not only by liberal use of schematic diagrams, but also by clinical imaging of difficult airway issues and an invaluable table comparing clinical
presentation of the differential diagnosis of thyrotoxicosis, malignant hyperpyrexia, and phaeochromocytoma, three potentially life-threatening endocrine emergencies, each of which is also dealt with comprehensively.

The remaining rarer endocrine diseases of the parathyroid, the adrenal (which is divided into adrenocortical and adrenomedullary chapters), and carcinoid syndrome are adequately addressed in subsequent chapters. There follows a useful chapter on endocrine emergencies, which brings together presentation and management of all scenarios in an overview. The penultimate chapter deals with steroids and vasoressin as therapeutic agents, a topic which facilitates a much more evidence-based content, and which includes a table of recommendations for steroid therapy in intensive care medicine.

The book concludes with a personal surgical view of endocrine surgery which recapitulates many of the facts and opinions of the preceding text, and although well written, seems somewhat superfluous, in the light of the book’s succinct style.

Overall, this textbook brings together the disparate subjects of endocrine physiology and pathology, clinical endocrinology, and relevant clinical anaesthesia and intensive care medicine, in a single concise text which should be immensely helpful to anaesthetic and perioperative physicians managing endocrine patients for elective and emergency surgery. I recommend it as a reference text for departments of anaesthesia, as most of us encounter diabetes and thyroid surgery regularly, and could potentially be faced with an unexpected rare endocrine elective or emergency case at any time.

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This book is edited by a team from Harvard Medical School, and written entirely by US-based authors. The book is aimed at medical students, who frequently spend a brief period within the specialty, and comprises seven sections subdivided into 32 chapters. The sections are ordered logically, beginning with an introduction to the specialty, followed by sections on pharmacology, preoperative considerations, intraoperative considerations, systems physiology and anaesthetic subspecialties, and finally special topics.

Each chapter is prefaced by a case study which the reader is advised to read before embarking upon the chapter itself. The chapters are generally well laid out with clearly stated key learning objectives preceding the main text body. There are a good number of photographs, illustrations, and tables. Every chapter concludes with answers to the case study and a suggested reading list; however, I would have liked to have seen key points summarized at the end of each chapter. The case summary allows the reader to explore a topic in greater detail, for example, the chapter on airway assessment and evaluation reviews basic anatomy, airway assessment, and techniques for securing and maintaining the airway. The accompanying case study explores the airway management of a 120 kg bearded man who presents a difficult intubation.

The introductory section has two chapters, the first providing an introduction to anaesthesia and an overview of training and career options for the US-based anaesthetist. While this is interesting for an established UK anaesthetist, it is of little relevance to a student considering a UK-based anaesthetic career. Chapter 2 briefly reviews the history of anaesthesia and includes an interesting case study about the open removal of a kidney stone in 1900.

Section 2 covers pharmacology in five chapters, beginning with pharmacology principles before discussing the specific pharmacology of i.v. agents, inhalation agents, local anaesthetic agents, and adjunct agents. Most areas are well covered, although a number of differences between US and UK practice are apparent in drug nomenclature and drugs which are available only in one country.

Section 3 focuses on preoperative considerations with four chapters covering preoperative assessment, airway evaluation and management, the anaesthetic machine, and anaesthetic monitors. Once again a number of differences between US and UK practice are apparent with the most notable being the requirement in the USA for a signed anaesthetic consent form and the medical gas cylinder colour-coding system (oxygen cylinders in the USA are green).

The five chapters of Section 4 discuss intraoperative considerations. The first two chapters cover anaesthetic techniques (sedation or general and regional) using the analogy between anaesthesia and flight to emphasize the importance of a meticulous approach to anaesthesia. The chapter on fluids and acid–base provides an excellent overview of a topic which is frequently covered less well in other areas of the medical student curriculum, the only caveat being that a number of the fluids discussed are not routinely used in UK practice, while other widely used fluids (e.g. gelatins and tetrastarches) are not mentioned at all. Chapters covering practical techniques and common intraoperative problems complete the section.

The longest section in the book, Section 5, covers systems physiology and anaesthetic subspecialties in nine chapters. All the major subspecialty areas are included and the sagest advice in the book is offered in the section discussing the airway in trauma and orthopaedics where the author states ‘good judgement comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgement’.

Postoperative considerations are discussed in Section 6 in three well-written and thorough chapters which discuss