

ESSENTIALS OF AUDIOLOGY, 4th edn

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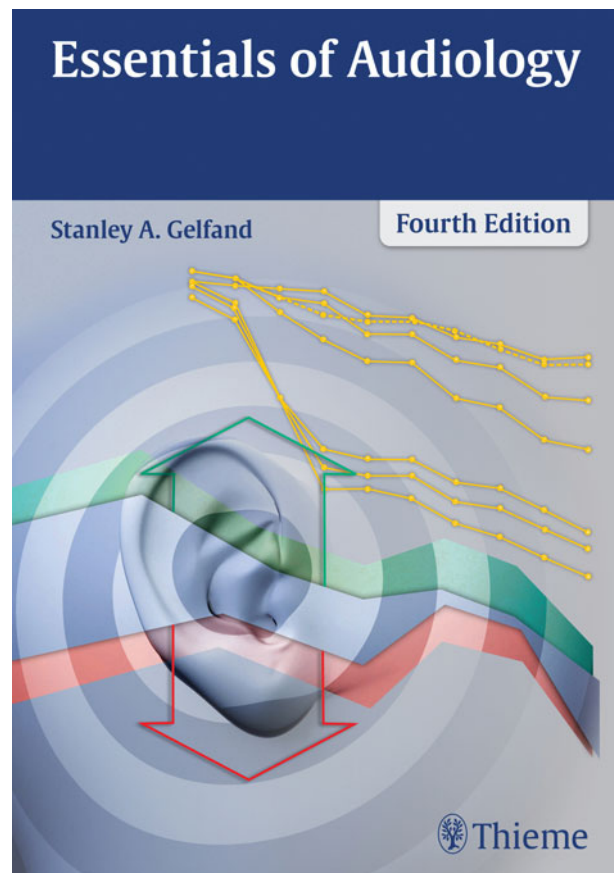
This is the fourth edition of this book. I reviewed the third edition in 2009, when its price was €59.95. It remains quite outstandingly good value. The latest version must be judged both as a 'standalone' textbook and as an update for purchasers of the earlier work. I think it passes the former test well, but I am less convinced that there is sufficient novelty to warrant the (minor, I do admit) investment in a replacement.

The cover has changed and now shows the progressive fall off in high frequency hearing so familiar to the more senior readers. It makes a welcome change from the earlier edition cover, of a pure tone audiogram, using the triangle symbols as only our US cousins could!

The preface I found curiously hard to follow, in marked contrast to the writing style throughout the book. We are told that this book is aimed at 'the two related professions of Speech and Language Pathology and Audiology' as an introductory text. As before, the content is well beyond what would be deemed 'essential' knowledge for surgical trainees, to whom the world of tone decay, recruitment and speech audiometry now seems a total mystery.

The preface does admit that changes to the text often reflect 'subtle advances', and it highlights updated sections on cochlear implants and electrophysiological testing. Alas, my third edition is no longer available for comparison, having been loaned out to a trainee; you can guess the rest. Each chapter is supported by an impressive number of references, but few seem dated post 2009. I thought the Anatomy and Physiology chapter might be a good measure of attention to recent advances, if only in the latter subject. I accept that Darwinian evolution of the contents of the temporal bone might take longer, but understanding of the physiology of the inner ear might have progressed. In practice, in two pages of references, I could find only two dated since the last edition, one of which is the author's own work. The chapter remains one of the best in the book, nonetheless.

In the era before the magnetic resonance imaging scanner, hunting the acoustic neuroma demanded



familiarity with acronyms such as 'SISI', 'LDL' and 'ABLB'. Surprisingly, what I had taken to be obsolete testing is still covered in detail, in 2016.

There are updates on central auditory processing disorders, on international guidelines and position statements, and on advances such as implantable hearing aids. In 2009, I described the third edition as 'an invaluable addition to any ENT departmental library', and, as my earlier copy is long gone, I welcome this. It is comprehensive, well written, easily understood, and ideal both for browsing and reading cover to cover (if selectively). If you do not have access to the third edition, you need to invest in the fourth. A book of this quality and comprehensive coverage, at this price, is a bargain. That, I know, begs the question...

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