

OTOLARYNGOLOGY PREP AND PRACTICE

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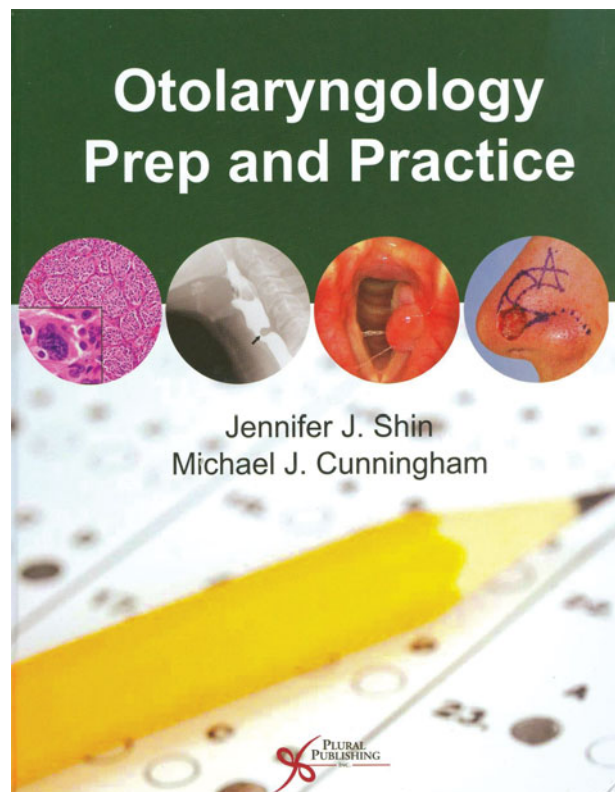
Plural Publishing, 2013

ISBN 978 1 59756 383 3 pp 1272 Price US\$279.95

When Mr Flood asked me to review an ENT exam preparation book, I expected an elegant, dainty little creature of possibly 200 pages at most. The reality, however, is that this book is an acromegalic titan in comparison. Its 1249 full colour A4 pages, with a much needed hardback cover, make for a menacing 6 cm thick tome, which makes you feel you are already halfway to passing your FRCS just by having it.

The book is divided into an introductory section about learning methods and how to use the book, followed by the various sub-specialties in ENT. There is a chapter on radiological images and another on histological slides. The majority of the book is devoted to short questions and answers, and follows a similar format to the 'ENT Secrets' series. I have to say some of the answers are a little short at times, and I would have liked to have seen more 'perfect viva answers' rather than one-word answers. There is a short chapter on case presentations, which follow a long case scenario, similar to the very useful articles in the newly revived *Otolaryngologist* journal. Personally, I would have preferred more long cases and fewer short, rapid fire questions, following a similar format to the UK FRCS exam.

The book does a great job of scaring the reader into doing some revision. The questions veer toward the minutiae end of the spectrum, rather than concentrating on important and common clinical scenarios and exploring these in depth. For example, on first picking up the book I randomly selected a question to test myself: I found 'What is glanders? Which bacterium is associated with glanders?'. I moved on rather tentatively to the otology section, hoping for better luck, and was faced with 'Alteration of what reflex



results in oscillopsia?'. Thoroughly depressed, I uttered some colourful metaphors and decided never to measure myself against this book ever again.

In all seriousness, this book contains vast amounts of information and is probably more suited to the American exams. In the UK, personally I think it would be best used in study groups to test one another in the run-up to our exit exam. On reflection, this book is more of a knowledge test than a true exam preparation book, and, on this basis, it excels. I would use this book to quickly highlight gaps in knowledge, and to pretend to be clever in front of my peers.

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