

Thieme Atlas of Anatomy: Head, Neck, and Neuroanatomy, 3rd edn

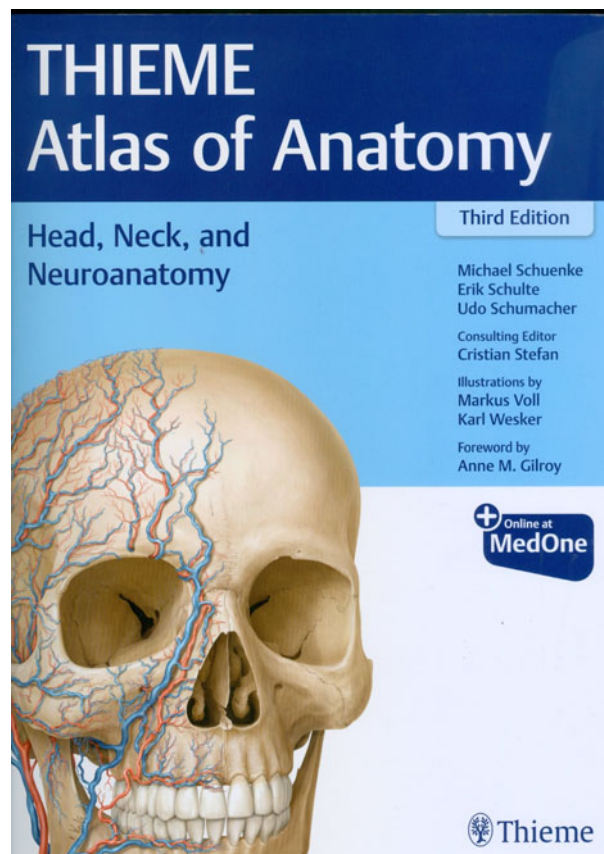
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Thieme, 2020

ISBN 978 1 62623 722 3 pp 575 Price £68.00 €74.99

This is a book packed with attractive content, which represents great value for money. If only we had had such anatomy texts in the 1970s. A personal recollection is of mind-numbing lectures, poorly attended, droning on about the course of various vessels and nerves and their relationships. Clinical relevance was never considered, but we did learn much Latin and heard of many an eponymous structure. The crypts of Lieberkuhn should have been the title of a Black Sabbath album, the fissures of Santorini an adventure in exploration, and the islets of Langerhans just a dream holiday in this pandemic age.

This third edition carries many a new illustration I am assured (I cannot check as the second edition has gone the way of most departmental books). The major expansion has been in the neuroanatomy section undoubtedly, but this still offers content of great relevance to our specialty.

The quality of the artwork that illustrates this softback atlas of over 500 pages is striking. Bone looks like bone, with highlights and shading, and shows up far better than it ever could in cadaver dissection photography. Even the brainstem anatomy is (almost) understandable. Clinical relevance is stressed; for example, pages 220–1, which illustrate endotracheal intubation, or, earlier, the workings of the inner-ear labyrinth. Histology and even the relevant physiology are presented in a simple introductory fashion, in the otolaryngology text. If, however, you do want depth of detailed coverage, do not ignore the neuroanatomy section. There you will find all you could possibly want on the central auditory pathway or innervation of taste sensation. This reminds us of just how much the two disciplines do overlap in the head and neck. The online content is of course available to the purchaser, and cleverly allows the labels to diagrams to be removed temporarily for self-testing. There is even a hardcover version available, using Latin nomenclature throughout, which will appeal to some personality types, no doubt.



This is a particularly easy book to review, as many readers will be familiar with its predecessors. For those not so familiar, I think a glance will 'sell it' to senior clinicians as much as to medical students. Some books are 'a must' for the departmental library (even if it is doomed to disappear within months).

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