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BOOK REVIEW

Title: ORTHOPAEDIC PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT
Author: D. J. Magee
Publisher: W. B. Saunders 1986
Price: £19.95 ISBN 0 7216 18553

The author, in his preface, describes the purpose of the book as the provision of a systematic approach towards comprehensive orthopaedic assessment. He includes history taking, examination procedures and investigation techniques as well as functional anatomy. His forte however, is patient examination, comprehensive in detail and in its wide ranging coverage of the teachings of such recognised exponents as Cyriax, Maitland, McKenzie, Mennell amongst many others.

Although the manuscript was originally developed as part of a manual for physical therapy students at the University of Alberta, the final text is offered to paramedical and medical students as well as to other health professionals. It has been a considered opinion of mine for some time that medical practitioners who pursue their interest in sports medicine often lack the basic essentials of good examination techniques. The physiotherapist on the other hand is often more conscientious in establishing a sound basis for assessment prior to utilising physical therapeutic modalities. I consider, therefore, the book would not be misplaced in the practising Sports Physician's library.

In his regional assessment the author includes the active movement, passive movement and isometric contraction philosophy of Cyriax, the joint play concept of Mennell and co-workers and the quadrant theories of Maitland. By bringing them all together he enables the reader to utilise the text as a suitable reference work in assessment of any part of the musculoskeletal system. There is no grouping of findings into patterns found in clinical syndromes; although the aims of the book do not primarily include interpretation of findings, postulates are made in the less contentious areas. The numerous clinical pictures and diagrams are well presented, although the quality of the X-rays is poor and ancillary investigatory techniques are not covered in any depth.

I commend this book to those medics and paramedics who examine patients and who wish to expand their examining techniques. I enjoyed reading it as the text was clear and set out in an orderly fashion. Readers who come across those concepts such as 'joint play', of which they have limited previous experience are advised to refer to texts by other authors in the list of references.

Michael A. Hutson