

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Steven H Miles. *Oath betrayed: torture, medical complicity, and the war on terror*. New York, Random House, 2006. Pp 220 illustrated, \$23.95, ISBN 1-4000-6578-X. Reviewed by Grodin MA and Annas GJ in *N Engl J Med* 2006; 355:1624-1625.

The author, a physician and bioethicist, describes the role played by US military physicians and nurses in the interrogation of prisoners in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq. He calls for transparency and accountability for military medical personnel and exhorts the medical community to take the lead in formulating new policies.

DA Shore (ed). *The trust prescription for health care: building your reputation with consumers*. Health Administration Press, 2005. Pp 165, \$63.00, ISBN 1567932401. Reviewed by Mathis RS in *J Med Ethics* 2006; 32: 555-556.

The author, a founder director of the Trust Initiative at the Harvard School of Public Health, emphasises the importance of trust in the health care industry. He says that while many continue to trust their own doctors and nurses, they do not trust the delivery of health care itself. This is the result of the industry's unscrupulous behaviour and the media's overemphasis on reporting negative stories. His solutions are mostly common sense and he offers a step-by-step approach to building trust into the workings of an institution.

David Wootton. *Bad medicine: doctors doing no harm since Hippocrates*. Oxford University Press. Pp 320pp, £ 16.99, ISBN 10:0 19 280355 7, ISBN 13: 978 0 19 280355 9. Reviewed by McClure I in *BMJ* 2006; 333: 606

The author traces the history of medicine in three sections. The first section is devoted to therapies since the time of Hippocrates till the early twentieth century; the second section deals with pioneers in medical knowledge from the mid sixteenth to the mid nineteenth centuries, but whose insights did not impact therapy; the third section from the mid nineteenth century onwards describes pioneering research that led to improvements in medical practice.

Sokol DK et al (eds). *Medical ethics and law – surviving on the wards and passing exams*. London, Trauma Publishing, 2005. Pp 293, £14.95, ISBN 0-95476-571-0. Reviewed by Quigley M in *J Med Ethics* 2006; 32: 556-557.

This book is for medical students and it follows the core curriculum set by the British Medical Association. It covers a diverse range of topics but explains the concepts in a somewhat simplistic fashion and with some humour to keep the attention of students.

Erik Parens (ed). *Surgically shaping children: technology, ethics, and the pursuit of normality*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pp 336, \$50, ISBN-13 978-0-8018-8305-7, ISBN-10 0-8018-8305-9. Reviewed by Alexander A Kon in *JAMA* 2006; 296: 2621-2622.

This book has multidisciplinary contributors; patients, parents of patients, surgeons, and ethicists describing surgeries for cleft lip/palate, lengthening for dwarfism, for infants with ambiguous genitalia. The book describes the conflicting goals of children who want to look "normal" and those who feel that society must accept those who are "different"

John D Lantos and William L Meadow. *Neonatal bioethics: the moral challenges of medical innovation*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pp 177 with illustrations, \$35, ISBN-13978-0-8018-8344-6, ISBN-10 0-8018-8344-X. Reviewed by Jon F Watchko in *JAMA* 2006; 296: 2739-2740.

When new technology appears, the question, particularly in newborns, is not "can it be done?" but "should it be done?" The authors discuss the evolution of neonatal medicine over the last 40 years, describing technical advances and the ethical challenges that resulted from them.

DJ Rothman and SM Rothman. *Trust is not enough: bringing human rights to medicine*. New York Review of Books Pp 236, \$24.95, ISBN 1 59017 140 3 www.nyrb.com. Reviewed by Arda B in *BMJ* 2006; 333: 1076.

The authors are social historians; they look at events in the past and present when medical interventions have adversely affected human rights. Subjects covered range from the Nazi experiments on humans to the AIDS orphans in Romania, and the recent shift of medical research to the developing world. The underlying theme of the book is the need to protect vulnerable populations.

Mary Loudon. *Relative stranger: a life after death*. Bond Street Books, 2006. Pp 335, \$32.95, ISBN 0-385-66127-4. Reviewed by Beck G in *CMAJ* 2007; 176 (3): 353-4

The author describes her efforts to understand her sister, who was estranged from the family as a result of schizophrenia. "The book captures the havoc this illness can wreak in the sufferer's life and relationships... (the) book (is) for those who doubt the impact of mental illness, both on the sufferer and his or her family... [it] can educate the reader about the myths surrounding mental illness and about the stigma that still exists regarding mental illness and especially schizophrenia."

Michael Wright and David Clark (eds). ***Hospice and palliative care in Africa: a review of developments and challenges***. Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp 528, £35.00, ISBN 0-19-920680-5. Reviewed by Mwangi-Powell F in *Lancet* 2007; 369:97-98.

The author, the executive director of the African Palliative Care Association, says that little was written about the pioneering and courageous efforts to provide palliative care in Africa until this book came along. It describes in considerable detail the programmes in 26 African countries, with stories of individuals who are struggling against tremendous odds to provide care to those in need.