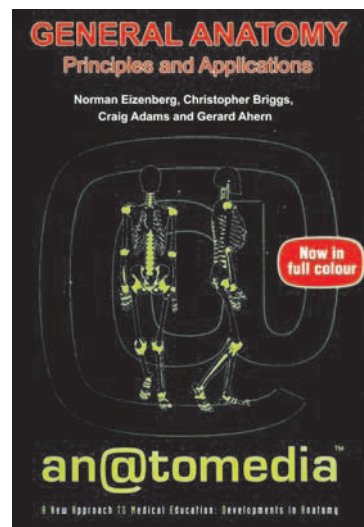


Anatomy: the real thing



General anatomy. Principles and applications. Norman Eizenberg, Christopher Briggs, Craig Adams, Gerard Ahern. Sydney: McGraw-Hill, 2007 (ii + 258 pp + CD-ROM, \$54.95). ISBN 978 0 07 013414 0.

AT FIRST GLANCE, I was nonplussed. Yet this is much more than a simple anatomy text. Compared with classical texts, it's light at only 700g (Martini's latest *Human anatomy* weighs 3.2kg). It is spiral-bound so that it opens flat anywhere. And it's no intellectual lightweight.

Written by a group associated with the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at the University of Melbourne, *General anatomy* is aimed at students in the health professions, and is clearly amenable to both problem-based and traditional discipline-based courses. My immediate impression was that it looked more like cartoon anatomy than the "real thing", and some of my anatomist colleagues were dismissive. However, when I showed it to a medical student the immediate response was, "Where can I get it? This is just what I've been looking for!" The more I explored, the better I liked it. The "cartoon" diagrams are actually excellent snapshots of key concepts and processes that integrate anatomy and function in an imaginative, logical and effective manner.

The text comes supplemented with a prize-winning audio-visual CD, "an@tomedialm", and is linked to a good website (<http://www.anatomedialm.com>). My heart sank when I started the CD on a Mac as it defaults to the Classic operating system, which of course is not supported on the latest generation of computers. However, it booted happily in OS 10.5.

I can't advocate this as a stand-alone anatomy text: the coverage is too superficial. As a back-up learning resource, however, it's superb. The index is rather sketchy, but the book is laid out so logically that it's easy to find what you are looking for, and there's a lot of medical information there. I'll definitely keep this: my student friend can buy her own!

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