As they begin their intimidating task of learning dentistry, I bet students would be happy to see a nifty, user-friendly little book like *Dental Instruments: A Pocket Guide* among their required textbooks!

Aimed at the beginning dental or dental hygiene or assisting student, this guide is a quick but comprehensive introduction to just about every instrument used in dental practice. Arranged by instrument type and specialty use, the book contains seventeen chapters, including Basic Dental Instruments, Handpieces, Burs, Evacuation Devices and Air/Water Syringe, Endodontic Instruments, Oral Surgery Instruments, and many more. Everything used in a dental office is in this book, from protective eyewear to the most esoteric endodontic reamers and orthodontic pliers. Disposables are included, such as nitrile utility gloves, matrix bands, and linen finishing strips. But most of the book consists of a carefully arranged and detailed catalogue of every possible hand-held dental instrument, from angle formers to Wedelstaedt chisels, curettes to amalgam condensers, elevators to needle-stick protectors.

Pocket-sized and spiral-bound, this book is like a well-organized set of flashcards, and it is intended to be used as such. It is arranged in landscape orientation, with the page above the spiral showing a clear photograph or line drawing of the instrument without any text, and the page below giving the instrument name and a concise description of its function and “characteristics.” Often the pictures are labeled with numbers indicating the parts or special features of the instrument, which are detailed in the characteristics section on the page below. In the book’s preface, the author suggests students fold the book back to use the illustration pages as flashcards to “try to name the instrument from memory, and describe its function and special characteristics.”

A particularly useful feature of the book is its inclusion of tray set-up pages at the conclusion of each chapter. The tray set-up for amalgam restorations includes twenty-six instruments, each of which has been detailed in the chapter. The oral surgery chapter offers two sample set-ups, one for extraction of the maxillary right first molar and one for extraction of an impacted mandibular molar. Both a periodontal surgery tray set-up and a dental hygiene set-up are included. I can see these set-up pages being quite useful for dentists who are doing in-office training for new personnel. Another excellent section is the chapter on Sterilization Equipment, which covers cassettes, wraps, ultrasonic cleaners, and several types of autoclaves and monitoring systems. It even presents an illustrated step-by-step sterilization management system. Dental auxiliary students studying for licensure examinations in infection control will find this comprehensive and easy to use.

Another nifty thing about *Dental Instruments: A Pocket Guide* is that Elsevier Saunders publishing company has linked it to its Evolve Student Learning Resources Center on the World Wide Web. For students, the Evolve site has quizzes for each chapter of this guide and web links for further study. It also has a video-game-like “drag-and-drop” section in which students can test their skill at selecting the correct instruments for a given procedure and arranging them in the proper sequence on the tray. For faculty, the Evolve site has lots of handy tools and features. Once the course has been registered with Elsevier, every image in the book can be downloaded in a form preformatted for use in PowerPoint presentations. There are also downloadable test sheets and a question bank that allows faculty to customize questions if desired. The Evolve site also offers faculty a course management program with many of the course tool features of proprietary programs like WebCT. For faculty who use WebCT, there are downloadable “e-Packs” of management information that can be used directly to set up a WebCT course for use with the book.
On the Evolve site, there is also a list of other Elsevier textbooks available in the area of dentistry. From the selection, I gather that their target audience is in the dental auxiliary field, as opposed to D.M.D./D.D.S. students. When I was reviewing it, I discovered that it is currently being used in UMDNJ’s School of Health-Related Professions dental assisting and dental hygiene programs. For D.M.D./D.D.S. students, it would most probably be used in a Basic Dental Sciences course, as opposed to a specific discipline course, as it crosses many disciplines.

I found Dental Instruments: A Pocket Guide fun to use and surprisingly informative. Students in any dental field who require basic information could benefit from its clarity and thoroughness in presenting the instrumentation of our profession!

Orthodontics: Current Principles and Techniques
4th ed.

Thomas M. Graber, D.M.D., M.S.D., Ph.D., Odont.Dr., D.Sc., M.D., F.D.S.R.C.S. (Eng); Robert L. Vanarsdall, Jr., D.D.S.; Katherine W.L. Vig, B.D.S., M.S., F.D.S. (R.C.S.), D.O.
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As the title suggests, this book presents a collection of topics that represent the current principles and techniques employed in orthodontics today. It has been the most popular orthodontic textbook around the world since its inception nearly thirty-five years ago. It is intended to be the most complete reference textbook at the graduate level and beyond. Clearly, the authors have achieved their objective. The authorship of this latest edition is now shared by Dr. Katherine Vig, a notable addition.

This edition is arranged in two parts: diagnosis and treatment planning, and techniques and treatment. In this arrangement, chapters relate to each other better than in similar textbooks. There is a connection between topics such as physiology and genetics with biomaterials.

The second part does not follow this format; instead, a collection of contemporary orthodontic techniques and practices are presented as discrete entities. This format works well for this part because it covers a long list and just about everything is covered. The value of each chapter, however, is determined by its author: whereas some authors are more evidence-based, others refer only to their own experience.

It is disappointing to note that not all the illustrations are high quality. This is a common problem in our PowerPoint culture. Most authors delete the original images and use only the PowerPoint-compressed images. Unfortunately, what projects well on the computer monitor or silver screen is not good enough for printing. Also disturbing to the eye is the quality of the paper used for printing: it bleeds. Finally, the printed colors display a rather muted tone.

The writing style is acceptable. Some authors write better than others in an edited book of this nature, but obviously much work has gone into helping the book to have a common style. In its entirety, the book reads well. Since many of the clinical topics convey their authors’ beliefs, explanations, and impressions rather than evidence, this book has limited use as a reference book. Despite this criticism, the how-to manual elements are remarkably useful for the new student.

The utility of this book cannot be overemphasized. In spite of its high price, mentors should feel most comfortable recommending this iconic textbook to their students. The orthodontic practitioner will also find it useful at many levels. Chapters of basic science are as comprehensive and well presented as well as are the clinical topics.

Overall, this is a book any reviewer could recommend with high enthusiasm. Editor and authors alike should be complimented for bringing such a colossal task to completion. Its influence is certain to be long-lasting.