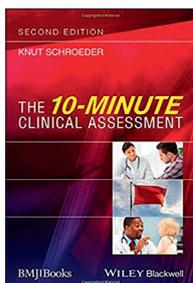


The 10-Minute Clinical Assessment

Knut Schroeder

Wiley-Blackwell, 2016, PB, 832pp, £49.99, 978-1119106340



A SYSTEMATIC AND EASY TO FOLLOW GUIDE — FROM HIRSUTISM TO HEART FAILURE TO SELF-HARM

Ten-minute consultations are often rushed affairs with most of us running late. So how do we keep to time while being clinically effective, safe, and patient centred? *The 10-Minute Clinical Assessment* by Knut Schroeder has the answers.

The book provides a helpful guide for GPs, nurses, GP trainees, and medical students wanting to deliver a more efficient consultation that also includes the essential clinical content. It covers a comprehensive range of subjects with 154 different clinical presentations included. These range from hirsutism to heart failure to self-harm. It also includes an excellent section on medically unexplained symptoms and homelessness; I can't remember the last time that I have read a consultation book that routinely covers an assessment on homelessness. This book is thorough!

Complex presentations, multiple morbidity, and polypharmacy are increasingly common in general practice and are definitely found in this book. These sections were particularly useful to read given how tricky these cases can be to manage in 10 minutes. The approach that is set out within each assessment is systematic and easy to follow. Each section is a quick read with bulleted points that cover only the essentials. There are also helpful additional grey boxes to highlight the red flags that should not be missed.

I think this book could also be helpful outside of the consultation when trying to get through the mountains of admin and filing of blood results. This is because

it has informative and succinct sections that could be used to revise electrolyte imbalances (hypokalaemia, hypocalcaemia, hyponatraemia), bleeding disorder, and anaemias. Although the clinical content is great, this book was a real winner for me in terms of the practical points and guidance provided at the start of each section. These points clearly show years of experience in general practice and are golden.

Although I was initially putting off reading these 814 pages of black and white text in size 10 font, it was a totally worthwhile and easy read. I can certainly see myself using this book as a quick reference tool during consultations and have already found a special spot for it on my desk.

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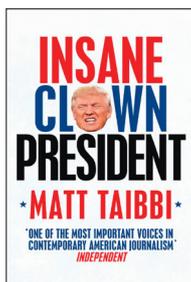
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp17X690737>

Insane Clown President: Dispatches from the American Circus

Matt Taibbi

WH Allen, 2017, PB, 352pp, £14.99, 978-0753548400



HAND IN GLOVE

In *Insane Clown President* Matt Taibbi, a journalist for *Rolling Stone* magazine, chronicles the Republican primaries and the subsequent presidential election of 2016. He sets the tone for the book in his introduction in which he gives a fascinating insight into the dysfunctional hand-in-glove relationship of politicians and the media in the US. Existing within a frenzied bubble,

this self-absorbed symbiosis moves as a herd from photo opportunity to photo opportunity, judging policies only by the response that they elicit in the polls and entirely losing any meaningful contact with the wider public.

The next chapter is odd and somewhat out of place. It is a precis of a previous book by Taibbi in which he predicted the rise of someone like Trump and, in order to adequately summarise the book, he has stuffed the chapter so full of footnotes that it is almost physically painful to read. After this, and making up the rest of the book, are reprints of articles written by Taibbi throughout the campaign.

In the early articles Taibbi spews witty invective, not only on Trump and his supporters, but also on anyone and everyone with right-leaning politics. It is interesting to see how the tone of the articles changed from arrogant derision to incredulous despair as the campaign progressed.

Throughout, Taibbi made valiant efforts to explain the unfolding events, including finally recognising the negative impact of the 'gang-trolling' of potential Trump voters by the media and warning that the Democratic Party was failing to see what a threat Trump really posed.

Without doubt Taibbi is an insightful and eloquent observer, and some of his thoughts during the campaign were frankly prescient, such as his predictions on the role of 'fake news' in the campaign, and the likelihood of a future President Trump banning media outlets from the White House. Reading this book has certainly piqued my interest in reading anything that Taibbi writes in the future, but the book itself suffers because it was out of date even as it went to print.

In retrospect, his analyses of the campaign as it was happening were remarkable but, unfortunately for him, you will already have heard all of these analyses a thousand times in the months since Trump's victory.

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