BDA library centenary book survey to find the most influential dental book by category since 1920

The survey had 110 entries and the votes are in yielding some interesting results - surprisingly every category except one had a runaway winner.

**Dental public health**

“The Scientific Basis of Dental Health Education” (now Oral Health Education) by R S Levine won the Dental Public Health Category with 42.9% of the vote. This title first appeared in 1978 as a pamphlet published by the Health Education Council and went through several editions before being published in a proper book form for its fourth edition by BDJ books in 2004. Now in its 8th edition and published as part of the BDJ Clinician’s Guide series it has become an essential work for dentists and the dental team.

**Endodontics**

This category was won with a massive 77.8% of the vote by “Cohen’s Pathways of the Pulp”. Now with a 12th edition due out in October this year edited by Louis Berman and Kenneth Hargreaves, this textbook began life in 1976 edited by Stephen Cohen and Richard Burns. The first edition was reviewed in the journal “Operative Dentistry” by Lyle E Ostlund (Operative Dentistry 1977; 2 (3): 127) who said, “To have successfully put a book of this magnitude together is laudable...” and in the *Journal of Prosthetic dentistry* by Manuel Weisman (Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry 1977; 38 (1): 111) who describes it as “one of the newest and one of the most comprehensive texts on endodontics and related subjects published to date.” Both reviewers highlight the science section particularly with Ostlund declaring it “of fundamental informational value” and Weisman calling it “One of the outstanding features of this new text”. Judging by our survey results Cohen’s book has obviously stood the test of time to become and indispensable work for all dental practitioners.
Dental implants

Another category with a runaway winner with 66.7% of the votes and this time the book was “Contemporary implant dentistry” by Carl Misch which beat Branemark’s landmark book “Tissue integrated prostheses: osseointegration in clinical dentistry” into second place. The first edition of this book was published in 1993 and with its latest, 4th edition just out in March this year the authorship has been taken up by Randolph R Resnik following Carl Misch’s death in 2017. According to Resnik, he was “responsible for pioneering the foundations and protocols that are universally utilized today in the mainstream field of implantology”. In the dedication to the new edition Misch is referred to by the new author as “one of the true ‘fathers’ in implant dentistry” and the results of this survey seem to bear that out.
Orthodontics

“Contemporary Orthodontics” by WR Proffitt and HW Fields won over half of the votes in this category although Laura Mitchell’s “An Introduction to Orthodontics” was chosen by nearly 30% of responders. Proffitt’s textbook first came out in 1986 and in 2018 a 6th edition was published and reviewed in the BDJ by Rabia Dean who said, “…this new edition presents as an impressive holistic book, covering all key topics within the field of orthodontics in great detail” (BDJ 2019; 226: 828). Based the University of North Carolina, and inaugural recipient of the AAO Lifetime Achievement Award in Orthodontic Research Proffitt died shortly before this latest edition was published. However, judging from our voters his legacy will live on as orthodontic students in the future pick up this text.

Periodontology

This category yielded the oldest textbook winner with its first edition being published in 1953. The title at that time was “Clinical Periodontology: The Periodontium in Health and Disease, Recognition, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Periodontal Disease in the Practice of General Dentistry” known colloquially as “Glickman’s Clinical Periodontology” and its latest 2019 title is “Newman and Carranza’s Clinical Periodontology”. Glickman, Carranza and now Newman have continued to improve and enhance this title over the last 66 years. The expansion in the scope of the book to cover improvements in cellular and biological understanding, reconstruction, regeneration and a worldwide pool of chapter writers has kept this text at the forefront of periodontal learning.
Prosthodontics

“Fundamentals of Fixed Prosthodontics” by Shillingburg, Hobo and Whitsett was the book voted for by the most people on the whole survey and won this category with 73.5% of the vote. The first edition of this classic work was published in 1976 although the book began life as a series of handouts to dental students by University of Oklahoma chair of the Department of Fixed Prosthodontics, Herbert T Shillingburg. According to the reviewer of the third edition by then it was, “the standard on fixed prosthodontics” (Beck, DA. Book Reviews – Fundamentals of Fixed Prosthodontics. Journal of Prosthodontics 1997; 6 (4): 316-20) and despite not being updated since 2012 it seems to have remained so featuring consistently each month this year in the top 30 of the BDA library’s ebook collection.

Restorative dentistry

This category was the closest fought one with “Sturdevant's Art and Science of Operative Dentistry” just pipping “Pickard’s Manual of Operative Dentistry” by four votes. “The Art and Science of
Operative Dentistry” first appeared in 1968 co-authored by Clifford M Sturdevant of UNC-Chapel Hill School of Dentistry who later went on to become president of the Academy of Operative Dentistry in 1975. According to their website (https://academyofoperativedentistry.com/history.html#4) his book became “the best selling dental book in the world.” In a review of the second edition, Thomas Garman declares it “a benchmark in operative dentistry textbooks” and believes the authors have achieved their stated purpose of nurturing “the dental student and practitioner in the quest for excellence in judgements and skills in operative dentistry, assist[ing] the searching of the discipline, and benefit[ing] the health of the dental patient.” (Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry 1985; 54 (4): 611)

Other worthy titles

A further category was presented to voters with a list of six titles to pick from to go forward to the final survey to find the ultimate dental book since 1920. Voters could choose more than one title and despite this Scully’s Medical Problems in Dentistry gained 41.7% of the votes with the second most popular, Andreasen’s [Textbook and Color Atlas] of Traumatic Injuries to the Teeth only achieving 23.6%. This is a tribute to just how indispensable the title is to the general dental practitioner met with patients with any number of underlying conditions. The title is rarely out of the top twenty ebooks every month despite not being updated since 2017. Of those titles put forward in the “Other suggestions” category more than once Cawson’s “Cawson’s Essentials of Oral Pathology and Oral Medicine” was mentioned several times and so merits a chance in the final survey. Interestingly, R A Cawson is also a co-author of Medical Problems in Dentistry.
The search now carries on for the ultimate dental book of the last 100 years – have your say here
https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CTI7IW/

- Essentials of Dental Caries by E A M Kidd and S Joyston-Bechal
- Evaluation, Diagnosis and Treatment of Occlusal Problems by P E Dawson
- Fractures of the Mandible/ Fractures of the Middle Third of the Facial Skeleton by H C Killey
- Medical Problems in Dentistry by C Scully and R A Cawson
- Paediatric Dentistry by R Welbury
- Other Suggestions