

Preface

Why another undergraduate book in Obstetrics and Gynaecology? The older books have started from the basis of didactic teaching of clinical management while their editors have tried to keep pace with the changes in the specialty. There is no emphasis on the underlying biochemistry and pathogenesis of the various clinical conditions. Rather, it is a concentration on clinical diagnosis and management.

Medicine in general has changed rapidly and this will continue for the foreseeable future. Obstetrics and Gynaecology has been at the forefront of these developments. Some examples are a trend away from gynaecological surgery towards other forms of management; continuing development of sub-specialties of fetal-maternal medicine, reproductive medicine, and gynaecological oncology; women with serious medical disorders can now have children when in the past this was impossible or very dangerous. These changes are driven by the need and ability to understand at least some of

the basic science behind the clinical problems. It is important that medical students ask questions as to what is going on at a molecular, cellular, and tissue level and to then understand what can or can't be done and why. This book starts from this premise and attempts to give the reader a broader and more scientific perspective than most of the current undergraduate books.

It contains more information than the standard undergraduate needs to pass his exam in O & G but hopefully it will begin to enthuse some students towards a specialty that is increasingly diverse and at the forefront of so many aspects of human biology. It will also be invaluable to junior doctors in the specialty who will find it especially useful for postgraduate studies such as the MRCOG. This book will be a very valuable addition between the basic undergraduate textbooks and the very large and very comprehensive postgraduate books and as such is recommended to the junior specialist in training.