

Contents

Dedication	vii
Foreword	ix
Author's Preface	x
Acknowledgments	xii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Medical Testimony: The Key Issue in Most Cases Tried to a Jury	1
(a) The Importance of Medical Testimony	1
(b) Types of Cases—Auto Suits to Toxic Torts	1
1.2 The Problem with Medical Experts	2
(a) More Knowledgeable	2
(b) More Effective Partisans than Other Witnesses	2
(c) Highest-Status Witnesses	3
(d) A Witness that Must Be Confronted	4
1.3 Solving the Problem	4
(a) Preparation/Discovery	4
(b) Follow the Techniques of Cross-Examination— Technique Is the Key To Solving the Problem	5
(c) Effectively Arguing Testimony in the Case	5
1.4 Goals of Cross-Examination	6
(a) Admissions Helpful to the Case	6
(b) Discrediting the Witness	6
(c) Discrediting the Witness's Testimony	7
(d) Get Only What You Need for Argument	7
Chapter 2 Preparation	9
2.1 Investigation Before Discovery Deposition	9
(a) Discovering Anatomy—Key To Understanding the Language of Medicine	9
(1) Independent Study—General Anatomy	9
(A) Reference Books	9
(B) Doctors Who Are Friends	10
(C) Private Lessons—Anatomy Teacher	10
(D) Courses at University	10
(E) Anatomy Seminars—Taught by Anatomists and Doctors	11
(2) Goal and Warning	11
(A) Need Only Basic Anatomy— Doctors Often Too Technical	11
(B) Need Only Enough To Talk to Doctor	11
(C) Need Only Enough To Simplify for Jury	11
(D) Never Use Your Knowledge Solely To Demonstrate Your Knowledge to the Jury	11
(3) Basic Terms—a Simple Anatomy Lesson	12
(A) Names of Parts	12

(B) Joint Movements	12
(C) Some Anatomical Terms	12
(b) Discovering the Doctor and His or Her Opinions	13
(1) Sources of Information About Doctors	13
(A) Telephone Books	13
(B) Medical Board Inquiry and National Practitioner Databank	13
(C) The ABMS Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists	14
(D) Prior Depositions and Activities	14
(i) Expert Deposition Bank	14
(ii) Deposition Bank—Your Own	15
(iii) Files of Activities—Newspaper Articles, Internet Sources	15
(iv) Local Lawyer Information	15
(v) Fellow Doctors	15
(vi) Standard Witness Investigation	16
(2) Medical Writings	16
(A) <i>Index Medicus</i> —Medline	16
(B) Refereed Journals	16
(C) Local Medical Society Journals	17
(3) Sources of Information—Opinion of Doctor	17
(A) Medical Records—Office Records	17
(B) Opinion Letter—Key Tool in Cross-Examination	17
(i) Understand Technical Language	17
(ii) Understand Content	18
(c) Opinions in Other Cases	18
(1) Sources of Information—Medicine	18
(A) Medical Texts, Journals	18
(i) Standard Medical Texts— <i>DSM IV</i>	18
(ii) Journal Articles	19
2.2 Discovery Depositions	20
(a) Goals and Warning	20
(1) Use Discovery To Prepare Cross-Examination	20
(2) Preliminary Matters	20
(A) Scheduling	20
(B) Subpoena Duces Tecum	23
(C) Fees	23
(D) Court Reporters—Care and Feeding	23
(E) Method—Live, Telephone, Video Conference, Videotaping	23
(F) Preliminary Deposition Statements	24
(G) Get the File and Records	24
(i) Take Possession and Review the File	25
(ii) Make Sure the File Is Complete	25
(iii) Testing Answers—Removed Anything?	25
(iv) Get Correspondence with Lawyer	25
(v) Get Opinion Letters to Lawyers	25
(vi) Reviewing Handwritten Notes:	25

What To Look For	26
(vii) Consultation Reports	26
(viii) X-rays, Reports, and Photographs	26
(ix) Laboratory Data	27
(x) Slides and Tissue Blocks	27
(b) Areas of Inquiry and Techniques	27
(1) Qualifications	27
(2) Get Curriculum Vitae—Areas of Inquiry	28
(A) Professional Training	28
(B) Specialty Training	29
(C) Board Certification	29
(D) Professional Societies and Organizations	30
(E) Hospital Staffs	31
(F) Teaching	31
(G) Publications	31
(H) Nature of Practice—Practice Profile	31
(3) Experience as a Witness	32
(A) Number of Depositions and Trials	32
(B) Number of Exams, Reports for Non-Treatment	32
(C) Usual Charges—Examinations, Hourly, Deposition, Court	32
(D) Relationship with Lawyer	32
(E) Advertising	33
(4) Contact with Patient	33
(5) Other Knowledge	33
(A) Conference with Lawyer	33
(B) Re-Explore Any Notes or Writings	33
(C) Ask Whether Records or Reports Were Expected But Not Received—Additional Research	33
(D) Other Materials Reviewed	34
(6) Establishing Authority	34
(7) Opinions and Bases	34
(8) Admissions on Discovery Depositions— Preserving Good Answers	36
(A) Qualifications	37
(B) Authoritative Texts	37
(C) Helpful Medical Facts	38
(D) Confirming the Opinion	39
(E) Confirming Sufficiency or Insufficiency of the Opinion	40
Chapter 3 Planning Cross-Examination for Trial	41
3.1 Starting Strong—Finishing Strong	41
3.2 Do Not Follow the Sequence of Direct Examination	41
3.3 Sequence—Qualifications, Texts, Opinions, Credibility	42
3.4 Length	42
Chapter 4 Phrasing Questions—Controlling the Testimony	43
4.1 Leading Questions Only	43
4.2 Do Not Repeat the Direct Examination	43

4.3	Nonresponsive Answers—an Opportunity for Control	43
	(a) Controlling the Nonresponsive Answer	44
	(1) Motion To Strike	44
	(2) Require a Responsive Answer	44
	(3) Simply Repeat the Question	45
	(b) Narrow the Question—not “Why”	46
	(c) Rephrasing and Pursuing the Question To Get an Answer	47
	(d) The Deal	50
4.4	“Is It Fair...?”	50
	(a) Do Not Overuse	51
	(b) Use at a Crucial Point	51
4.5	“Is It Good Medical Practice...?”	51
4.6	“Would That Be of Significance (or Interest) To You?”	51
4.7	“Now, This Is Important....”	52
4.8	Repeating Verbatim Discovery Deposition Questions	53
Chapter 5	Techniques of Cross-Examination	55
5.1	Voir Dire the Doctor	55
	(a) Lack of Qualifications	55
	(b) No Foundation for Opinion	55
	(c) Use Information in Voir Dire To Attack Credibility and Decrease Weight	55
5.2	No Questions	55
	(a) Not Hurt	56
	(b) Vital Information Missing	56
5.3	Attitude of Cross-Examination	56
	(a) Inquiring After the Truth	56
	(b) Danger of the Frontal Attack	56
5.4	Breaking Down Testimony into Component Parts—The Key to Cross-Examination	57
5.5	Simplifying for the Jury—Not Too Technical	57
5.6	Accentuate the Positive	69
	(a) Breaking Questions Down Into Component Parts and Expanding Points for Emphasis	69
5.7	Eliminate the Negative	71
	(a) Placing Medical Facts in Perspective	71
	(b) Exposing Weaknesses in Conclusion by Breaking Down Negative Points which as a Whole Are Negative, But which Standing Alone Are Not	73
5.8	Attack the Basis of Opinion—Not the Opinion	73
	(a) How To Attack the Basis	73
	(1) Circling the Wagons	74
5.9	Attack What Is Ignored in the Opinion	77
5.10	Attack Ill-Chosen Words	77
5.11	Putting Opinions in Perspective	77
	(a) Opinions Are Only Opinions	77
	(b) “Are You Wise Enough...?”	78
5.12	Attacking the Hypothetical Opinion	78
	(a) Factual Attack—Setting It Up	78

(1) Focus on the Case	79
(b) Alternative Hypothetical	79
(c) “Is It Consistent with...?”	79
5.13 Advancing Your Claims	80
5.14 Cross-Examination with Medical Texts	82
5.15 Demonstrative Evidence, Charts, and Diagrams	83
Chapter 6 Areas of Cross-Examination	85
6.1 Qualifications	85
(a) Well-Qualified Witnesses—No Questions	85
(b) Not Qualified by Training	85
(c) Not Qualified for the Case	86
(d) Not as Qualified as Your Expert	87
(e) Not Board Qualified or Board Qualified Only	90
(f) Failing Board Certification Exams	91
(g) Hospital Staffs—Name Only	92
(h) Privileges Removed; Discipline	93
(i) Retired	93
6.2 Credibility (Bias, Prejudice, Interest, Motive)	93
(a) Professional Witness	94
(1) Not Treating Doctor	94
(2) Income from Exams and Advertising	95
6.3 Payment for Time, Helping Party that Pays	96
(a) Relationship with the Lawyer on a Side of the Case (Plaintiff or Defendant Only)	96
(b) Conviction of a Crime	98
(c) Memory	98
(d) Prior Inconsistent Statements	99
6.4 Conflicts in History	100
(a) Establishing the Importance of Recorded History	100
(b) Tying the Doctor to the Records	101
(c) Prior History	101
(d) History of Doctor Versus History of Patient	104
(e) Lack of History on Relevant Issue	106
(f) Conflict of History Between Doctors	108
(g) Conflicts in Own History	112
(h) Inaccurate History Affecting Opinion	115
6.5 Examination	116
(a) Establishing Variation in Examinations— Positive and Negative Findings and Tests	116
(b) Tests Not Performed	118
(c) Failure To Observe (Saw Patient One Time Only)	119
(d) Client Cooperation	119
(e) Subjective Versus Objective	119
(f) Conflicts with Other Doctors	122
6.6 Standard Medical Facts—Examples	122
6.7 Medical Texts	125
(a) Authoritative Texts	125
(b) Doctor’s Own Writings	129
6.8 Opinion: Some Direct Attacks	130

	(a) Possible/Probable	130
	(b) Aggravation	131
	(c) Other Causes (Differential Diagnosis)	132
	(d) Alternative Hypothetical	136
	(e) Permanency	142
	(f) Other Damages	143
Chapter 7	How it Looks at Trial	145
7.1	Cross-Examining the Defense Doctor	145
	(a) Cross-Examination of an Examining Doctor in a Personal Injury Case—One Example	145
	(b) Cross-Examination of the Defense Doctor— Another Example	153
	(c) Cross-Examination of the Defense Doctor—Another Example	165
7.2	Cross-Examining the Plaintiff's Treating Doctor	172
	(a) Cross-Examination of a Treating Doctor in a Workers' Compensation Case—One Example	172
	(b) Cross-Examination of Plaintiff's Doctors—Another Example	177
7.3	Cross-Examining Plaintiff's Doctor in a <i>Daubert</i> Hearing and at Trial	189
	(a) Cross-Examination of Plaintiff's Expert in a <i>Daubert</i> Hearing	189
	(b) Trial Cross-Examination of Plaintiff's Asbestos Expert	205
7.4	Cross-Examining a Defense Consultant in an Insurance "Coverage" Case	223
7.5	Importance of Proximate Cause	238
7.6	Closing Argument	238
Index		241