Preface

Intraoperative consultation is often the cornerstone for optimizing surgical management of disease. Nowhere is this principle more evident than in the field of Gynecologic Pathology. An open and clear dialogue between the pathologist and the gynecologist is critical; it ensures that the pathologist has all the information needed to arrive at the correct interpretation of the material. For the gynecologic oncologist, it assures the best evaluation of the material and allows for clarification of any issues regarding the procedure, such as which margins are involved, and how close a tumor is from a specific margin. The value of freezing a minute specimen should be weighed against the potential of destroying it, thereby hindering the ability to establish a definitive diagnosis on permanent sections. Although the resolution of these issues needs to be documented on paper, the subtleties can only be conveyed through direct interaction, often face to face, between members of the team.

The handbook is not an attempt to cover Gynecologic Pathology in depth in an encyclopedic format; several outstanding texts are readily available for that purpose. It is designed to address practical issues, as encountered by the surgical pathologist in the daily practice of intraoperative gross and microscopic consultation. It reflects our experience in several tertiary care hospital settings with active gynecologic oncology services. The format follows a variety of specimens as they arrive at the frozen section room from the operating room, and the sequence of events that are initiated in examining, processing, and reporting the results. It highlights the ensuing dialogue between the pathologist and the gynecologist seeking specific information from the consult. To achieve that, the text is not limited to discussion of frozen sections; it encompasses all aspects of intraoperative consultation. Critical differential diagnostic issues are considered in detail, and the limitations of intraoperative consults are considered. The key features of common lesions are listed to
highlight their diagnostic criteria. An ample use of figures helps to illustrate and contrast features of the different tumors encountered. Except when noted, all illustrations are from our personal files, and all histologic slides, unless stated otherwise, are stained with routine Hematoxylin and Eosin.

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Houston, TX, USA
Donna M. Coffey, MD
Irvine, CA, USA
Ibrahim Ramzy, MD
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Coffey, D.M.; Ramzy, I.
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