Book reviews

Advances in pain research and therapy, Volume 5

Edited by: John J. Bonica, Ulf Lindblom, Ainsley Iggo. Raven Press, New York, 1983

This handsomely produced book is a collection of 70 preselected papers which were presented at the Third World Congress of Pain in 1981. They are longer than the actual presentations and therefore are more useful. Each section is preceded by a quite full over-view of the present state of knowledge. While some of the material included in the Introduction seems to be of interest mainly to the Society of origin, the remainder of the papers present a very high standard of information. There are extensive sections on the peripheral nerve and the relay functions of the spinal cord, the neuropharmacology of pain and analgesia, the descending modulating system, the clinical evaluation of opiates and the use of spinal and epidural narcotics. There are papers on stimulation techniques, another chapter on pain and inflammation, and a collection of mainly neuro-surgical papers on deafferentation pain. The section on psychological methods in chronic pain is very mixed, and includes discussion on measurement and treatment of pain, also quite variable in approach. The last section is a small collection of papers on neurologic pain. This is a book to dip into for specific information. It does not cover the whole spectrum of pain management and control, and can not be regarded as a text book on the subject. However, for those interested in the physiology and pharmacology of pain, this is an excellent volume and there are also some items of clinical value to the anaesthetist treating patients with chronic pain. It would be a worthwhile addition to a library.

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Principles of pediatric anesthesia

Edward J. Bennett, Denis E. Bowyer, Charles E. Thomas (Publisher) Springfield, 1982, \$34.75 us

This text was written for the general anaesthetist without extensive subspecialty training in paediatric anaesthesia. It attempts to provide for the occasional paediatric anaesthetist a comprehensive overview of what is current and important in the realm of paediatric anaesthesia.

The chapters, as one would expect, progress from basic physiology of the infant and child through to anaesthesia for specific conditions. These chapters are for the most part easy to read, well referenced and in agreement with the experience of paediatric anaesthetists elsewhere. Highlights of the text include a special chapter dedicated to anaesthesia for the newborn and a chapter on fluids in anaesthesia and surgery, which is a thorough discussion of an often poorly understood subject.

Lacking in these pages are plates, graphics and tables, which often facilitate the learning process; this is offset, however, by the easy reading prose. Those portions of the text where the authors refer to their own personal experiences in dealing with specific situations, are excellent and filled with sound advice.

Principles of Pediatric Anesthesia is a good text for the general anaesthetist who is often confronted by a paediatric patient.

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Intensive care instrumentation, 2nd Edition

D.W. Hill, A.M. Dolan. Academic Press (London) 1982, £30.00

This book is a gold mine of information about instrumentation used in the intensive care field. It is

organized into chapters based either upon similar measurement goals (e.g., blood pressure, cardiac output, respiration, respiratory gases, blood gases and pH, temperature) or upon particular equipment (e.g., ventilators, humidifiers, electrodes, defibrillators, pacemakers, computers). In addition, important chapters on patient safety and patient monitoring from a system overview are included. For all of the topics covered, an extensive reference list, well organized by chapter and/or technique provides further suggested reading.

The book is written in a relatively terse style, but the inclusion of explanatory drawings and photographs of equipment serve to communicate the principles of the measurement devices and techniques as well as their capabilities. Although the authors assume a moderate level of competence with physics and electronics in the reader, this should not be beyond anaesthetists with appropriate training.

This reviewer has few criticisms (e.g., the section on impedance pneumography seems overdeveloped, perhaps at the expense of strain gauge pneumography which is neglected), and considerable praise for specific topics (e.g., the chapter on patient safety).

Overall, I rate this book a valuable addition to the complex field of medical instrumentation, useful as both a reference and learning source, and appealing to medical and technical personnel alike.

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Diagnostic de la Stupeur et des Comas
F. Plum, J.B. Posner. Masson Editeur (Paris)

Enfin, la traduction française du magistral "The Diagnosis of Stupor and Coma" de Plum et Posner, 3e édition (1980). Ne vous y méprenez pas, c'est bien la version française de la 3e édition en Anglais même si la couverture de "Diagnostic de la Stupeur et des Comas" porte la mention 2e édition. Cette édition comporte beaucoup d'améliorations sur l'édition antérieure: le chapitre un a été largement ré-écrit, on a refait en partie les chapitres deux et

cinq et un nouveau chapitre, le huit, traite du traitement initial. C'est donc un ouvrage beaucoup plus complet qui tout en conservant sa base physiopathologique tient compte des derniers développements technologiques. La traduction réalisée par le professeur Maurice Masson en est fidèle et élégante. Les illustrations sont de bonne qualité mais légèrement inférieures au volume américain. "Le Diagnostic de la Stupeur et des Comas" de Plum et Posner est un ouvrage important: il devrait être lu et relu par tout anesthésiste-réanimateur.

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Thoracic anesthesia

Joël A. Kaplan. Churchill Livingstone, (Academic Press Canada) 742 pp, 1982, \$102.70

This book fulfils a great need for a comprehensive textbook which discusses in detail the information required in relation to anaesthesia for the thoracic surgical patient. The book has been written with the collaboration of multiple experts from North America, including specialists in anaesthesia, thoracic surgery, pulmonary medicine, critical care medicine and radiology.

The text is divided into five parts, with 21 chapters, which deal with the development of thoracic anaesthesia and surgery, assessment of the patient, cardiopulmonary physiology and the consequences of the open chest and one-lung ventilation on respiratory physiology, specific anaesthetic considerations for thoracic diagnostic procedures and thoracic surgery, and postoperative intensive care.

As with any joint authorship textbook, this book contains some duplicate information which is necessary for the understanding of the subject. Fortunately, duplication is minimal and occurs mainly with respect to fundamental principles, a recurrence which is beneficial to the reader.

The order of presentation of the subjects demonstrates the collaboration which must exist within the "surgical anaesthetic team"; indeed the difficulties encountered by the surgeon are well described as

are the problems to be overcome by the anaesthetist.

Following an extensive review of thoracic radiology, the text deals with basic physiological concepts as well as the most recent advances in physiology, monitoring and therapy. The multiple references provide the reader the opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons, even if current guidelines are well established.

The chapter on pediatric and neonatal thoracic surgery summarizes in detail all the facets of the problems that the anaesthetist may meet while dealing with these patients and also reviews the steps to be taken to avoid or to overcome these problems.

The last section on postoperative intensive care makes the book additionally valuable. This book covers all subjects which relate to thoracic anaesthesia; it will be very useful to the anaesthetist and is also an outstanding reference source. Every anaesthetist, even if rarely likely to administer thoracic anaesthesia should benefit from reading this textbook.

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Clinical pulmonary medicine

Gordon L. Snider, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1981. \$29.50 us

In the preface of Clinical Pulmonary Medicine, the book is "directed toward medical students, particularly those taking electives in pulmonary medicine, and to clinicians who do not specialize in pulmonary medicine." It is also intended for allied health professions, i.e., critical care nurses, respiratory technologists, physiotherapists, etc., who may deal or treat patients with pulmonary disease.

In general the book is well written and it provides relevant and informative reading devoted to all aspects of pulmonary disease. The first hundred pages provide an excellent anatomical, physiological and clinical approach to pulmonary medicine. The selected readings at the end of each chapter are extensive and current.

This is a superb, concise, clinically oriented review of pulmonary medicine and is strongly

recommended to students, residents, physicians and others requiring a practical and useful review of pulmonary disease.

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Basic physics and measurement in anaesthesia

G.D. Parbrook et al., William Heinemann Medical Books (London), 1982, £13.50

This text provides a simple, non-mathematical, and occasionally elegant introduction to basic physics related to anaesthesia. For example, the chapter "Natural Exponential Functions" should enlighten even the most mathematically disinclined anaesthetist.

Unfortunately the authors are much less successful when they deal with applications and measurement techniques. They have reduced these descriptions to such a basic level that they are of little use to the clinician faced with the need to make decisions on the use and purchase of modern technology.

For example, their treatment of the Coanda effect leaves the reader almost completely in the dark concerning fluid logic systems and similar criticism could be made in many other areas.

The chapter on electrical safety is totally inadequate for use by the practising anaesthetist.

The section devoted to the handling of data is also inadequate and would have been better left out. The brief one page devoted to computers is an insult to the intelligence in this era of the home computer.

The authors have compounded these problems by providing neither references nor guides to further reading, leaving the reader with no directions which would aid him in extending his knowledge.

While the basic physics is well presented, if there is to be only one book on the subject of physics and measurement in the library of either the examination candidate or career anaesthetist there are other and better books.

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Interpretation of the electrocardiogram – a review for health professionals

Karen M. Jones, Ginger M. Ochs, Appleton-Century-Crofts, East-Norwalk, Connecticut, 1982, \$16.95 us

The preface states that this book is intended to review the basic concepts of arrhythmia interpretation and is to be utilized as a supplementary workbook in a formal electrocardiography course. Approximately 370 ECG strips are presented, in addition to a brief review of cardiac anatomy and physiology. The first of the ECG practice strips have an excellent answer key which includes directly labelled PQRST complexes. This same labelling format is not carried throughout the book, which is unfortunate. This labelling would have been even more than beneficial in the review of complicated arrhythmias, where identification of individual components of the complexes is often difficult for the learner.

The text introducing the various arrhythmias would be clearer to the student if one labelled and analysed ECG strip accompanied each individual theoretical presentation. The inclusion of information concerning aetiology, clinical signs and symptoms of individual arrhythmias as well as a chapter on the treatment of arrhythmias appears to fall outside of the objectives as stated in the preface. Lead II rhythm strips are presented throughout. Many centres now use other leads for monitoring and diagnosis in patient care and therefore in teaching programs. In conclusion, I feel the authors have not met their stated purposes, and I cannot recommend this book as part of a formal program teaching health professionals interpretation of ECG rhythms strips. However, the text does provide a large number of ECG strips covering a wide variety of arrhythmias, and may be useful as a source of practice for the individual learner.

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