Book Reviews

Cardiac Anesthesia, Second Edition

Joel A. Kaplan (Ed). Grune & Stratton, 1987.

ISBN 0-1279-2246-6 (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Canada, Don Mills) \$192.95

The second edition of *Cardiac Anesthesia* edited by Joel A. Kaplan, contains 1122 pages in two volumes. Dr. Kaplan states in the preface that he hopes the new edition will maintain its place as the standard reference textbook in the subspecialty. The 32 chapters in this book have incorporated major additions, revisions and updates, resulting in a dramatic improvement over the first editions of *Cardiac Anesthesia* published in 1979 and its companion of *Cardiac Anesthesia* (Cardiovascular Pharmacology), published in 1983.

The two volumes are divided into six parts: (1) anaesthetic pharmacology, (2) monitoring, (3) preoperative management, (4) anaesthesia for cardiac surgery, (5) support of the circulation, (6) postoperative care. Chapters contain extensive bibliographies for those interested in pursuing the literature.

The section on anaesthetic pharmacology is excellent, with very comprehensive chapters on opioid analgesics and the new muscle relaxants. While the first edition of *Cardiac Anesthesia* contained a chapter on haemodynamic monitoring and one on electrocardiographic monitoring, the second edition has been expanded to include four chapters in the monitoring section. These include chapters on haemodynamic monitoring, recent advances in electrocardiographic techniques, central nervous system monitoring and an exhaustive treatise on intraoperative echocardiography. Anaesthesia for cardiac surgery has separate sections dealing with uncommon diseases and cardiac anaesthesia, management of emergency revascularization and cardiac transplantation.

In short, although this text carries a heavy price, the major overhaul from the first edition should warrant its purchase by those interested in cardiac anaesthesia or by those who deal with patients having cardiovascular disease. In my opinion, Dr. Kaplan has fulfilled his objective to create a definitive reference text for cardiac anaesthesia.

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Clinical Controversies in Neuroanesthesia and Neurosurgery

J. Matjasko, J. Katz (Eds). Grune & Stratton, Orlando, Florida, 270 pp. ISBN 0-8089-1817-6 (Academic Press, Canada, Don Mills) \$50.00

This book addresses a number of important controversies in the field of the clinical neurosciences. There are five chapters each written by two authors to provide both a surgical and anaesthesia perspective to the controversies in management of the following conditions: ischaemic cerebrovascular disease, cervical spinal cord injury, intracranial tumours, head injury and intracranial aneurysms. The chapter on cervical spinal cord injury by Mackenzie and Ducker is very well written, with a fine description of the pathophysiology of C-spine injury and initial management of patients with this problem. This chapter provides one of the most interesting of the controversial stances when the authors advocate that patients with C-spine injury who require intubation in the acute situation be orally intubated following a rapid sequence induction while an assistant applies axial traction to the cervical spine. An excellent discussion of the sitting position and all its attendant controversies is offered by Bedford and Colley. It is unfortunate a much fuller discussion of the controversy surrounding extracranial-intracranial bypass surgery was not included in the chapter by Grundy and Heros. This is in spite of a reference to the 1985 publication in the *New England Journal of Medicine* by the EC/IC Bypass Study Group. The book is generously referenced, allowing the reader to further pursue the various controversies presented. Except in rare instances, such as listed above, the most recent references cited are to 1984. This book will be of value to all anaesthetists interested in the clinical neurosciences and would be a useful addition to the departmental library in centres where neuroanaesthesia is practiced.

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Handbook of Epidural Anaesthesia and Analgesia

B.G. Covino and D.B. Scott. 175 pp. Grune and Stratton, Inc., Orlando, Florida. ISBN 0-8089-1742-0

The authors (one from Boston and the other from Edinburgh) state that their "purpose in writing this book was to produce a well-illustrated text which provides the basic information required ... to learn the technique."

I believe that the authors are spectacularly successful in this aim as far as basic science information is concerned but the clinical sections are less successful.

The authors have provided a very complete, concise discussion of the anatomy, physiology and pharmacology required to understand epidural blockade. The illustrations are not only clear and informative, but also beautiful. There are very few typographical errors for a first edition. (Although Figure 2:14 on page 49 is incompletely labelled and one part is mislabelled.) My only complaint about this part of the text is that the pharmacokinetics of local anaesthetics are discussed under the complications section rather than under pharmacology.

The clinical section of the book has significant deficiencies in organization and completeness of coverage. The section on opioids for epidural use (on pages 77-81) does not even mention hypoventilation as a complication. Discussion of this is on pages 156-7 under drug-related complications of epidural anaesthesia.

Similarly, the technical description of the steps necessary to perform an epidural block mentions that an IV should be *in situ* but does not state that a fluid bolus should be administered prior to initiating the block. This is only mentioned in the section on treatment of hypotension. Minor complications are mentioned in the sections on "clinical considerations" for surgery and obstetrics but the recognition and treatment of severe life-threatening complications is relegated to the back of the text.

Although the binding and paper used in this book are of very high quality, it is not designed for easy portability (or "pocketability"). Because of this book design, as well as the deficiencies in the clinical sections, I feel that this book could be purchased by anaesthesia departments for use on-site in the operating room or delivery suite as a quick refresher on basic science related to epidural anaesthesia. I cannot recommend it to the trainee anaesthetist who would be better off buying one of the larger reference texts on epidural anaesthesia, or referring to the section on epidural anaesthesia in a major anaesthesia textbook.

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