Book Reviews

Lost Voices – Women, Chronic Pain and Abuse

Nellie A. Radomsky MD PhD. Harrington Park Press, New York, London. 160 pages

The author is a family physician in Red Deer, Alberta and a Clinical Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Calgary. She has conducted workshops and presented papers on abuse and chronic pain at both national and international medical conferences.

The book is 160 pages long, with 17 chapters divided into three parts; 1. Chronic Pain: The reality of what hurts, 2. Lost Voices: Women in the doctor's office and 3. The Healing Journey.

The book describes the association between chronic pain and abuse in women. The complexity of chronic pain and the inadequacy of simplistic medical models founded upon cause-and-effect thinking that search for a diagnosis and cure is discussed. The healing journey for patients with chronic pain involves patient ownership and acceptance of the pain rather than fantasy cures and magic pills.

The author proposes that women are silenced by cultural and historical forces in the doctor-patient relationship. Radomsky suggests that traditional "Hismedicine" is ideal for problems like broken bones but a greater sense of "Hermedicine" is needed. The history of women as healers, witches and outlawed midwives is reviewed.

The cover includes six rave reviews, (all by women). The book is written for both patients and health care professionals. It is recommended as required reading for all physicians who want to learn to care, as well as cure. This book is an intriguing dissertation on the complex relationship between abuse and chronic pain.

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Practical Pain Management

S.W. Coniam, A.W. Diamond. Oxford University Press, 1994. 105 pages. \$40.50 (Cdn). ISBN: 0-19-262404-0 (paper)

Practical Pain Management provides an overview of current thinking in the areas of pain mechanisms and management. The book is intended for people involved in the care of those suffering with pain – and presumably for the sufferers and their families as well. It is not intended for specialists and nor is it recommended for them. The authors, themselves specialists in pain management, cover a broad range of topics in pain that extend beyond the domain typically included in pain management. There are chapters on the perception of pain, the psychology of pain, and the assessment of pain. These are followed by a description of analgesic drugs and their actions and stimulation techniques used to treat pain (TENS and acupuncture). The final chapters are devoted to a discussion of various pain problems, including acute pain in cancer pain, long-term pain, musculoskeletal pain and neurogenic pain. Perhaps the strongest chapter deals with the problems of cancer pain and its management.

Each chapter is followed by a small but relevant number of references for those interested in delving more deeply into the chapter subject matter. The book would be of interest to the intelligent lay person concerned about pain and its management, patients in pain and their families, as well as psychologists, nurses, social workers and other allied health professionals involved with patients in pain.

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International Anesthesiology Clinics: Anesthesia for the Patient with a Transplanted Organ – Volume 23/Number 2; Spring 1995.

D. Royston, T.W. Feeley (Eds.). Little, Brown and Company, Boston. 145 pages. \$38 (Cdn). ISSN 0020-5907

Ten authors, seven from the United Kingdom, and three from the United States, contributed to this book which is divided into eight chapters. The first two describe the physiology, pathophysiology and anaesthetic implications and technique for patients with a transplanted heart. The third provides similar information about patients with transplanted lungs, and heart and lungs. The next chapters cover anaesthetic management for patients after kidney transplantation, while two chapters provide important details about the management of paediatric and obstetric patients who have had organ transplants. The final chapter discusses anaesthetic implications of the various immunosuppressants used in transplant recipients.

The first part of this book contains a very comprehensive summary of the physiology of the transplanted heart and the pathophysiology of the denervated heart is discussed. One weakness of this section is the sequence of the chapters; Introduction, Pathophysiology, Anaesthesia, and finally Physiology.

The chapter describing anaesthetic implications related to immunosuppressive medications is an excellent review of the newest immunosuppressants. One of the most interesting discussions is of the pharmacodynamics of anaesthetic agents in the kidney transplantation chapter.

Paediatric patients are discussed in relation to all organ transplants. Perioperative considerations regarding the transplanted heart and liver are outstanding. The discussion of the effects of pregnancy on transplanted organs and anaesthetic techniques is one of the pioneering publications in this field. The strengths of this book are the discussion based on the personal experience of the authors and its extensive, up-to-date bibliographies. Strangely, discussion of the adult patient after liver and combined multiple abdominal transplantations is omitted.

This is a well-written book. Considering the increasing number of patients with transplanted organs presenting for non-transplant surgery, this book should be an important addition to any anaesthesia library.

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ABC of Resuscitation - Third Edition

M.C. Colquhoun, A.J. Handley and T.R. Evans (Eds.). BMJ Publishing Group, 1995. 88 pages. ISBN: 0-7279-0839-1

This book was edited by a general practitioner and two cardiologists on behalf of the Resuscitation Council (UK) and incorporates the current European guidelines on the management of cardiac arrest.

The text is written in a simple and very readable format. There is ample space provided between various sections for adding notes. The editors have attempted to cover topics such as basic life support, advanced cardiac life support, resuscitation in special circumstances such as pregnancy and near drowning and continues through resuscitation training and the ethics of resuscitation. The book contains only 84 pages, and, as a result, is relatively superficial. It would best serve as an introduction for medical students and junior house staff.

Several algorithms have been presented for the management of major causes of cardiac arrest: ventricular fibrillation/pulseless ventricular tachycardia, asystole and electromechanical dissociation. In general, the protocols advocated by the authors are similar to the recommendations provided by the American Heart Association as a result of the National Conference on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiac Care in 1992. The algorithms presented would be strengthened by commentary on the strength of supporting evidence for the use of various therapeutic modalities.

The chapters on resuscitation during pregnancy and resuscitation at birth are weak. Each of these chapters has only slightly over three pages. In addition, some controversial therapies are advocated. Specifically, the authors recommend the use of sodium bicarbonate during the initial resuscitation phase in newborns, a questionable practice.

In summary, this text provides a remedial introduction to the science of resuscitation.

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Basics of Transesophageal Echocardiography

Terence D. Rafferty. Churchill Livingstone, Inc. 1995. 190 pages. ISBN: 0-443-08922-1

The preface to this single-author text states that its purposes are: "(1) to provide the reader with a description of the technical aspects of a basic transesophageal echocardiographic examination and (2) to provide the beginning and intermediate practitioner with a clinically oriented source of background information so necessary for valid interpretation of the acquired images." The author adds that "it is hoped that [the text] can be used as a spring-board to acquire an intermediate level of skill, with reliance on other authors for in-depth consideration of such additional topics as pulsed-wave Doppler evaluation of valvular flow velocities, continuous wave Doppler measurement methods and three-dimensional reconstruction techniques."

This relatively brief text is divided into four sections. Section I, Basic Considerations, discusses indications, complications and equipment mishaps. Section II, Patient Examination Sequence, describes the techniques and two-dimensional images that should be included in a complete routine examination using monoplane, biplane, or multiplane technology. It also includes a section on quantification of the severity of

valvular regurgitation using colour flow Doppler techniques. Section III, Techniques and Procedures, addresses pulsed-wave Doppler evaluation of pulmonary venous flow, and evaluation of right and left ventricular function. Section IV, Related Issues, discusses a potpourri of subjects including echocardiographic contrast techniques, aortic dissection, and quality assurance.

The text is well written, and the single-author approach provides a refreshing internal consistency and cohesiveness. All the chapters make worthwhile reading for the beginner, while providing a few pearls for the experienced practitioner. The illustrations are numerous, and well-chosen. The schematic diagrams that accompany many of the single-frame video images are especially helpful. The section on patient examination is excellent, stressing a series of steps that must be completed routinely for each subject. In this regard the book goes a long way toward achieving its first goal of describing the technical aspects of a basic examination. The section on quantification of valvular insufficiency treats this difficult subject clearly and comprehensively. A later section on techniques of mitral valve repair makes a nice companion to the diagnostic material. The section on quality assurance would be very helpful to someone who is responsible for administering an intra-operative transoesophageal echocardiography program.

The principal limitation of the text relates to what I perceive as major omission of content, some of which are acknowledged in the preface. There is no discussion of the physics of ultrasound, nor is there a description of how an ultrasound video image is produced. The basic controls on the console of the ultrasound machine that manipulate various aspects of the displayed image are not described in one place, although information about some of these is scattered throughout the text. I believe this is basic material which no practitioner can do without. As a consequence, subsequent topics like colour flow Doppler imaging, and pulsed wave Doppler analysis, are introduced without a firm theoretical basis. The reader is left without the capability to optimize ultrasound images, or to understand the origin of common artifacts. Similarly, the evaluation of stenotic valvular lesions by pulsed or continuous wave Doppler techniques is stated to be beyond the scope of the text. However, this subject strikes me as no more complex than, and at least as essential as, some of other topics that are covered. Consequently, the reader will have to look elsewhere for information about how to measure transvalvular pressure gradients and evaluate the severity of valvular stenoses. Finally, although a number of disease states are discussed throughout the text, there is no systematic introduction to the echocardiographic presentation of common pathological conditions that the practitioner will encounter.

In summary, this is a well-written text that makes worthwhile reading for beginners, and contains some relevant information for teachers and more experienced practitioners. As such it might make a useful addition to a library that already contains more comprehensive textbooks of echocardiography. However, because of the omission of several very important basic topics, it cannot be recommended as a first textbook of transoesophageal echocardiography, nor should it be the only book on this subject in your departmental library.

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