Book reviews

Manual of pediatric anaesthesia (Second Edition)

David J. Steward (Ed). Churchill Livingstone 1985
376 pages (Academic Press Canada, Don Mills)
\$32

This soft covered text has been designed as a quick and easy reference manual covering daily clinical problems facing the paediatric anaesthetist. The contributing authors, all members of the staff of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, have called upon a wealth of clinical experience and presented problems and solutions in a most understandable notebook fashion. The pitfalls of most situations are succinctly outlined, and a valuable listing of syndromes of importance to anaesthesia is appended. For these reasons alone this text is a must for any anaesthetist who must deal with children.

While the extensive experience of a tertiary paediatric hospital is the strength of the work, so is its downfall. The techniques advocated are often those done effectively only by dedicated paediatric anaesthetists working in tertiary care centres, while some relatively common problems such as bronchoscopy for foreign bodies are virtually ignored. The techniques outlined are at times ill-advised without the physician having the experience to match. Finally, some information is rather dated – the use of supplemental CO₂ to stimulate ventilation, the use of multiple volatile agents simultaneously, and the use of out-moded drugs such as Lorphan, trichloroethylene, methoxyflurane, or even ether must be questioned in any 1985 text. The man age of the "key" references in this text is 15.2 years, and many recent developments go without mention – haemodynamic monitoring, I.C.U. care, and parental involvement for example. Yet, in spite of these shortcomings, this book remains an extremely useful handbook to the everyday practice of paediatric anaesthesia.

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Basics of anesthesia

Robert K. Stoelting, Ronald D. Miller. Churchill Livingstone, New York, 1984, 499 pp. (Academic Press Canada, Don Mills) \$38.50

This new book covers a broad range of topics from basic pharmacology through physiology and pathology relevant to anaesthesia, to critical care medicine and management of chronic pain. It is well bound, clearly printed and has good illustrations. However the style of writing is not always clear and concise. Descriptions of anaesthetic techniques are often rather vague and incomplete while some important points are barely mentioned. For example, in airway management, the importance of chest auscultation to detect inadvertent endobronchial intubation is not emphasised where esophageal intubation is merely listed in a table of complications and not discussed in the text. This book is very much an American text. Over ninety per cent of the references are to American publications and there is no discussion of apparatus or drugs which are not used in the United States. British anaesthetists will be surprised to read that Sir James Y. Simpson administered ether to a parturient in England (he was an Edinburgh, Scotland, obstetrician) and that he gave chloroform to Queen Victoria (that was John Snow). Despite these criticisms *Basics of Anesthesia* contains much useful information although it cannot be wholeheartedly recommended.

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Anesthesia and the geriatric patient

Susan Wilson Kretchel (Ed). Grune & Stratton, Orlando, Florida, 1984 (Academic Press Canada, Don Mills) \$53.50

As the geriatric population grows steadily a greater proportion of the workload of the anaesthetist is devoted to the care of elderly patients and this trend

will continue in the years to come. Until the publication of this volume no textbook had been devoted specifically to this aspect of anaesthesiology. Thus this publication represents the first major effort to cover the field of geriatric anaesthesia.

Anaesthesia for the geriatric patient is a 252 page book which was inspired by an annual symposium on geriatric anaesthesia sponsored by the Department of Anaesthesiology at the Washington University School of Medicine since 1974.

The editor has selected 18 contributors to write the 16 chapters of the book. The chapters progress from physiologic processes of aging to anaesthesia for specific procedures in the aged. Preoperative assessment, pharmacology, monitoring and risk of anaesthesia and surgery in the elderly are also covered.

Unfortunately, despite its 16 chapters, this book fails to deal with some important aspects of geriatric anaesthesia. For example, nothing is written about musculo-skeletal alterations, diabetes and endocrine disease, neurologic disease (except occlusive vascular disease), fluid therapy or the interdisciplinary management of the aged. Furthermore no mention is made of anaesthesia for ophthalmologic or abdominal surgery which are among the most common procedures performed in the elderly. Some important topics such as premedication and postoperative ventilation are covered inadequately.

As with most multi-authored books there are many duplications and the quality in style and in approach to the subject varies from chapter to chapter. A few chapters are excellent, particularly some chapters relating to specific procedures, while most are acceptable and others are disappointing.

Despite the shortcomings described, this book does contain useful information for the clinical anaesthetist. A more careful editing process and the addition of material dealing with the aspects of geriatric anaesthesia which have been omitted or inadequately covered would have improved the quality and the usefulness of this book.

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Anaesthesia safety for all – proceedings of the 8th world congress of anaesthesiologists, Manila, Philippines, January 22–28, 1984

Q.J. Gomez, L.M. Egai, M.F. De La Cruz (Eds).
Excerpta Medica, Amsterdam 1984 \$130.75 (us)

This book records the summaries of the five plenary sessions as well as the structured symposia presented at the World Congress by invited lecturers from many countries. As with any book of this type, the presentations are those of the individual speakers so that they are varied in structure and format. No free papers from the Congress are included.

The symposia bring together ideas and anaesthesia experience from many countries of the world. This is the major advantage of the book. However, some of the papers are presented by anaesthetists whose mother tongue is not English so that the meaning occasionally is not clear. Many of the papers are similar to those that one would find in publications such as the ASA Refresher Course outlines. They provide data and information that is both up to date and valuable. There are some excellent papers in the book including those by Dr. John Nunn: "Pulmonary Problems in Anaesthesia"; Dr. B.R. Brown Jr. "Toxicity of Inhalation Anaesthetics"; Dr. J.J. Bonica "Basic Principles in the Management of Chronic Pain"; and Dr. D.J. Steward "Paediatric Diseases which May Cause Anaesthetic Problems (Prematurity)". Thus this book would be a very useful update on various topics for anaesthetists in Canada. In addition to common types of scientific presentations such as neurophysiology in anaesthesia, critical care medicine, anaesthesia for high risk obstetrics, isoflurane, computers in anaesthesia, etc. there are also interesting symposia on subjects related to developing nations. I was particularly interested in the discussion on Education in Anaesthesiology in African and Latin American countries. As well there was an excellent paper on Manpower in Anaesthesiology by Dr. J.H. Popin of Bogota, Columbia outlining manpower problems in Latin America.

This book is useful for anaesthetists practicing in developing nations as it does summarize a great number of concepts relating to topics such as paediatric anaesthesia, geriatric anaesthesia, anaes-

thesia apparatus, pain relief in normal delivery, monitoring in anaesthesia, etc. The book contains the summaries of ideas and experiences of 96 groups of anaesthetists practicing throughout the world. I believe that this in itself makes it a valuable book for the practicing anaesthetist.

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Quality of care in anaesthesia practice

John N. Lunn (Ed). Published by the Royal Society of Medicine, Macmillan Press Ltd., London. (£12.50)

Despite the rather daunting title and length (322 pages including index) this book has been a most pleasant surprise.

It is a publication of the proceedings of a symposium sponsored by the Royal Society of Medicine in 1983 at which invited speakers discussed a series of important topics related to quality control in our specialty. Following the presentations comments were recorded from specific individuals and from the floor. No one presentation is more than 12–15 pages and with the commentary can be read comfortably in a short period of time.

Equally valuable is the inclusion of a number of chapters by contributors from the United States. The first two chapters deal with discussions and mechanisms of quality control in the U.K. and the U.S.A. Other chapters deal with mortality and morbidity, obstetric anaesthesia, post-operative pain, continuing medical education and finally such areas as training evaluation.

This book is not for everyone. The physical presentation is more difficult to read than the average book and the rather large number of short individual comments at times detracts from the impact. However, the first chapter describing and defining quality control and audit I found particularly useful. As is only natural from such a format, there is a little too much description of "we do this here" rather than "how might we improve this", but there is an obvious attempt by all participants to break new ground in an area that is generally regarded as uninteresting or too complex to

approach. Not every anaesthetist will purchase this book, but all departments should consider making a copy available to browse through between cases.

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Clinical anesthesiology

Burnell R. Brown Jr., Casey D. Blitt, Robert W. Vaughan. C.V. Mosby Co., 1985. 401 pages. (Mosby Times Mirror, Scarborough) \$36.00

This new book, yet another "design primarily to serve as a textbook for medical students serving a clinical clerkship in anaesthesiology", is co-authored by three well-known figures of American anaesthesia. The preface promises an order of presentation paralleling the anaesthesia sequence and an attempt to avoid "strict dogmatism". The topics addressed offer a complete review of modern anaesthetic practice.

However, the book has several serious drawbacks. The format is one of many long chapters with a verbose style. The written text tends to be rambling with discussions which often are incomplete and which give little attention to priorities. Some of the material presented is too esoteric for clinical clerks (e.g. an ankle block requiring five individual nerve blocks or five types of spinal needles). There are errors ranging from inaccuracies in naming (e.g. "axillary nerve block") to mechanical misadventure (e.g. Fig 6-3 shows a scavenging hose snaking along the floor precariously close to the wheels of the machine). In addition, most figures in Chapter 9 are incorrectly numbered relative to the text. Monitoring of the neuromuscular junction appears to have been moved hastily from the chapter dealing with pharmacology to the chapter on monitoring but the figures were left behind. The written text contains numerous typographical errors.

In summary, this book is a disappointment, considering its preface and its authors. It appears to have been hastily compiled and suffers from poor editing. It is too long for most clerks to read during their short anaesthesia clerkships. Better books of the same length and books of more concise format

already exist. This book is not recommended reading.

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Pain

R. Rizzi, M. Visentin (Eds). Butterworth Publishers, Stoneham, MA. \$45 (US)

Despite its broad title, this collection from the Joint Meeting of the European Chapters of the I.A.S.P. is sensibly devoted to consideration of only two subjects. Neck Shoulder Arm Pain Syndrome and Pain in Children, are both very worthwhile subjects. Most aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of pain whether caused by malignant or non-malignant disease is covered but the quality is quite variable and often unoriginal. Some papers on shoulder arm pain discuss rather doubtful medical syndromes and are not very enlightening. The papers on psychological aspects is pitifully small except for one interesting discussion on group therapy. Also useful were cortical sensory evoked potentials for diagnosis and cervical sub-arachnoid block with neurolytic agents for pain control. Other papers on anaesthetic management were sketchy.

The most striking and original papers devoted to Pain in Children concern the psychological aspects of pain, particularly with regard to the origins and the development of pain in childhood, as well as in later life. Physical and psychological aspects of pain are better integrated than in the first part of the book, evident in chapters on headache, orthopaedic and cancer pain in children.

This book, although large and often repetitive is of value. While the chapters on pain in children show the way to integration of physical and psychological aspects, the section on the shoulder hand pain continues the classical, multi-disciplinary non-integrated approach. There is a lot of material of

interest to anaesthetists working in Pain, although not a great deal for those with just a casual interest in blocks for pain use.

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