Book Reviews

Anesthesiology, 9th Edition

T.J. DeKornfeld, T.J. Sanford, Jr. Appleton & Lange, 1995.
358 pages. \$39.95 (US). ISBN: 0-8385-0256-3

The ninth edition of this book is authored by the predominantly professorial staff of the University of Michigan Medical School. It is divided into 22 chapters containing 610 multiple choice qualifying-examination-type questions. A short essay reviewing the correct answer with a contemporary reference is provided for each question. The first four chapters cover introductory medical sciences and the last two chapters address intensive care medicine and medicolegal/ethical issues. Each of the remaining 16 chapters deals with an individual surgical specialty rather than specific procedures requiring anaesthesia, and as a result some questions are repetitive. For example, anaesthetic considerations for patients with rheumatoid arthritis are covered by similar questions found in several different chapters. Somewhat surprisingly, the editors allocated 44 questions to biochemistry (the longest chapter) but only 19 to thoracic anaesthesia (one of the shortest chapters). It is also surprising that anaesthesia for non-surgical therapeutic interventions (e.g., vascular embolization, extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy) and diagnostic procedures (e.g., magnetic resonance imaging) receives minimal to no coverage. The book is also short on questions reviewing specific problems encountered in post-anaesthesia care units and surgical day care centres. A chapter covering these areas would better reflect current clinical practice and underscore the nature of anaesthesia as a unique medical specialty. In the judgement of the reviewer, however, this installment in the series "Specialty Board Review" is still good value for the reader's money and like the previous eight editions, it should prove popular among trainees and teaching practitioners of anaesthesia alike.

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Handbook of Neonatal Anaesthesia

D.G. Hughes, S.J. Mather, A.R. Wolf (Eds). W.B. Saunders Company Ltd, 1996. 387 pages. ISBN: 0-7020-1829-5

The editors of this publication intend to give a comprehensive overview of the scientific principles inherent in the practice of anaesthesia for the newborn, together with practical advice for the management of routine and complex conditions. They have chosen an internationally respected group of authors to contribute chapters on a variety of topics related to neonatal anaesthesia, including *Specialist Neonatal Surgery*, *Neonatal Transport*, and *A View from Developing Countries*.

This book suffers from the same deficiency as most multi-authored publications: some chapters are very good; some chapters are not especially useful; there is some duplication of information, and some of the recommendations for treatment vary among chapters.

The strengths include an excellent chapter on Neonatal Monitoring – well organized, loaded with useful facts, and makes effective use of tables and graphs. The chapter on

Neonatal Resuscitation is brief, but makes good use of titles and summaries, as a handbook should. The chapter on Specialist Neonatal Surgery makes interesting reading, as it demonstrates what the variety of dogma used to justify different management of the same anaesthetic challenge. I am surprised that awake intubation appears to be so frequently used, even in specialty units.

This handbook has a number of useful chapters, and the recommended Management of Common Neonatal Conditions makes interesting reading. To suggest, however, that the handbook be essential reading for all trainees and experienced anaesthetists would be an overstatement.

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Cardiovascular Physiology

H.-J. Priebe, K. Skarvan (Eds). BMJ Publishing Group 1995,
311 pages. ISBN: 0-7279-0781-6

This book is part of a series of comprehensive reviews of important clinical topics entitled "Fundamentals of Anaesthesia and Acute Medicine". The aim of this volume is to "provide a summary of the fundamental aspects of cardiovascular physiology that are useful and necessary for the anaesthetist and intensive care physician". The editors have assembled an internationally recognized group of experts who contributed 10 chapters covering myocardial metabolism, function and blood flow, cardiovascular control mechanisms, cerebral, pulmonary, splanchnic and peripheral circulations, and anaesthesia and the cardiovascular system.

The size of this small softcover book is deceptive: each chapter provides a detailed up-to-date review and reference. It bridges the gap between textbooks of anaesthesia and physiology and will be of specific interest to the clinician who wants more physiology than anaesthesia texts provide, and to the physiologist who wants more clinical relevance than standard physiology texts.

In Canada, the book is distributed by the Canadian Medical Association (at a discounted price to CMA members). It will form a valuable addition to the reference library of clinicians and researchers whose practice includes anaesthesia or critical care.

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