Book Reviews

International Practice of Anaesthesia

Cedric Prys-Roberts, Burnell R. Brown Jr, John F. Nunn (Eds.). Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996. Approximately 2000 pages. \$195.00 (US). ISBN 0-7506-0240-6

This book is a substantial reference comprising two volumes and 167 chapters. The chapters address all aspects of clinical and academic anaesthetic practice. Each chapter has individually numbered pages, averaging about 15 pages in length. There are approximately 200 contributors, principally well recognized names from the United States of America and the United Kingdom. While there are authors from the European Community, these are few in number. There is one Canadian contributor. There are no third world contributors to this summary of "international" practice. The preface notes that this volume is the lineal descendant of "General Anaesthesia," a text which went through five editions between 1959 and 1989. In some ways the older title is more appropriate than the new.

The editors have effectively controlled the writing style from one chapter to the next. However, presenting a true international view has proved to be more difficult. When perusing the book, I found myself discriminating the American chapters from the European. The authors were evidently not held closely to presenting a true international picture. For chapters describing basic science or other fundamental issues this is not a major issue. For other topics, e.g., the law and quality assurance, two chapters are presented, representing the UK and US experience separately. For others, the discussion represents the experience common to the author's country of practice. The net result is a large text which is uneven in content and does not represent the international practice of anaesthesia.

Where does this book belong? There are many useful chapters by well respected authorities which give the book considerable value. The European influence adds extra interest in some areas. The book would be a useful addition to most departmental libraries. It is not an appropriate primary text for residents in Canadian programmes. Most practitioners would be better served by the standard North American textbooks of anaesthesia.

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Advances in Anesthesia, Vol. 14

Carol L. Lake, Linda J. Rice, Richard J. Sperry (Eds.). Mosby Year Book, Inc, 1996. 359 pages. \$112.00. ISBN 0-8151-5277-9

This book contains 11 invited chapters on a diverse group of topics in anaesthesia. The authors are varied, representing a number of academic centres in the United States. Some, but not all of the senior authors, are well known. The breadth of issues covered is striking, but it is likely that all readers will find at least one or two chapters pertinent to their interests or practice. There are chapters covering new technologies, for example, simulators, personal computers, and new methods of drug delivery. Other chapters deal with issues of practice management, for example, cost control and ethical issues. There are also chapters discussing specific aspects of clinical practice, for example, lung transplantation, paediatric pain management, and perioperative cerebral protection.

The chapters are well laid out and easy to read. The reviews are generally not exhaustive but present simple introductions to the topic area. Some of the chapters would not exceed the requirements for residency core programme teaching sessions. Detail is sacrificed for accessibility.

This book allows practicing anaesthetists the opportunity to review quickly major issues concerning the topics presented. However, more detailed information can be found in standard textbooks and in journal review articles. In summary, I would not buy this book for my personal use or the department library.

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Textbook of Military Medicine.

Part IV Surgical Combat Casualty Care. Anesthesia and Perioperative Care of the Combat Casualty

Brigadier General Russ Zajtcuk, Christopher M. Grande, MD (Eds.). Office of the Surgeon General, United States Army, TMM Publications, Falls Church, Virginia. 1995. 931 pages.

This volume, released in 1995, represents the latest addition to an ambitious project by the US Army, to produce a comprehensive military medicine encyclo-

pedia. It is a four-part series which will eventually comprise as many as 14 volumes. Interestingly, because it has been produced by the US Army, it cannot be sold, but is available from the Office of the Surgeon General of the US Army at no cost, subject, of course, to availability.

In the editorial disclaimer, the stated purpose of the book is for "military medical educational use...the focus of the information is to foster discussion that may form the basis of doctrine and policy." In so doing, a wide range of authors, including staff anesthesiologists, residents, and civilian consultants have come together to produce an impressive compilation of topics which are important to the practice of anesthesia in a military sphere. In fact, this book may be of interest to anyone who contemplates the delivery of anesthesia in austere conditions, in the third world, or where trauma may be the most prevalent problem facing the anesthesiologist.

Much of the material is what one would expect in any anaesthesia text, with chapters devoted to airway management, shock, pharmacology, regional anaesthesia, pain management, malignant hyperthermia, and monitoring. There are also a number of chapters which deal with injuries and disease on a system-by-system basis. The emphasis on these chapters is in dealing with the combat casualty and the specific problems that these patients present. Finally, there are military specific topics, such as combat trauma, deployable hospitals, military anaesthesia machines, military transfusion practice, evacuation, chemical warfare, and a history of military anaesthesia.

The chapters are generally well written and complete, though a number of errors are evident and these are noted in the included erratum. Because the authors are not necessarily experts in the subjects there are over 100 copywritten tables, diagrams and drawings used with permission. The book might be improved with more detail on the techniques of giving anaesthesia in the field, as few military anesthesiologists in the US Army have spent time on deployment. Alternatively, a military anaesthesia companion handbook could be the answer to providing the practical detail required when one actually finds oneself sitting in a tent in the middle of nowhere waiting for the patient to arrive, surrounded by unfamiliar equipment.

Future editions will be almost a requirement as, unfortunately, in the past two years there have been many new anaesthesia field systems and machines which are in use by different NATO partners. Education in these systems will need to be covered in the future, especially with the increasing "cross pollination" which is occurring among the NATO countries.

These minor criticisms aside, this is an excellent book. It is the first comprehensive military anaesthesia book available and will be required reading for any military anaesthetist.

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The Complete Recovery Room Book, 2nd ed.

Anthea Hatfield, Michael Tronson. Oxford University Press, 1996. 482 pages. \$67.50 (Cdn)
ISBN 0-19-262715-5

This 487 page soft cover book has been written by two Australian anaesthetists as a practical, "hands-on" manual for individuals who are planning to work in a postanesthetic recovery room. It is directed at personnel who are neither fully trained anaesthetists, nor specialist trained recovery room nursing staff. The initial few chapters review many general principles of post anaesthesia nursing care, as well as focussing on problems with regard to particular surgical procedures and as well as different patient age groups.

In contrast to the first edition, the second edition includes sections on physiology, pharmacology, and pathophysiology as it pertains to the postanesthesia patient. The two chapters on "Pain Control in the Recovery Room" and "Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting" are both good reviews of these topics. The chapter on the cardiovascular system, although detailed, does not include the standard American Heart Association ACLS Cardiac Arrest Protocols. As well, the chapter on blood transfusions alludes to the risk of transmitting diseases from the donor to the recipient but does not put into context what the actual risk may be.

The final few chapters deal with the practicalities of creating a recovery room, the acquisition and maintenance of equipment, as well as staffing and administration of a postanesthetic care facility.

In conclusion, this book may be useful for those working in smaller community hospitals, with General Practitioner (non-certified) anaesthetists, who are planning to review or upgrade their perioperative recovery room area. It is useful basic text for perioperative nursing care.

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Comprehensive Postanesthesia Care

Morris Brown, Eli M. Brown (Eds.). Williams and Wilkins, 1997. 573 pages. ISBN 0-683-01116-2

This book was written by 35 individuals from 20 institutions in the United States. It is divided into three sections. The first section provides a general overview of the development of postanesthesia care units, equipment, and monitoring requirements in the PACU, and general clinical considerations. The second section provides a description of the physiology, pathophysiology, and management of the patient in the postoperative period by organ system. There are three additional chapters dealing with special considerations for geriatric, pediatric, and ambulatory surgical patients. The final section, provides a review of the administrative structure, physical design, and continuing quality improvement program for postanesthesia care units.

Although succeeding in being a "comprehensive" text on the subject of postanesthesia care, the book displays some of the common problems of multi-authored textbooks. There is some variation in depth, style, and quality among contributors. Furthermore, there is duplication of information, particularly in the chapters of "Fluid and Electrolyte Management," and "Metabolic and Endocrine Disorders." Some chapters are not particularly useful, such as "Neuromuscular Blockage" as there is an overemphasis on pharmacology, while giving minimal mention to postoperative problems. The strength of this book is its' thorough review of pathophysiology, and physiology. However, it does at times fall short in dealing with treatment, and management of problems.

Overall, this book makes a good reference text for nurses and anaesthetists who care for patients in the postoperative period.

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