Book & New Media Reviews

Ralph Milton Waters, MD, Mentor to a Profession

Lucien E. Morris, Mark E Schroeder, Mary Ellen Warner. Proceedings of the 2002 International Symposium on Professionalism in Anesthesiology. Wood Library-Museum, Park Ridge, IL, 2004. 260 pages. \$45.00 US. ISBN 1 889595 13 6

This book is the proceedings of a Symposium on Professionalism in Anesthesiology to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the appointment of Dr. Ralph Waters to the faculty of the University of Wisconsin. He became the first full-time, academic appointee charged with both the provision of anesthetic services and the creation of a program to train physician anesthesiologists in the world. All of us who practice anesthesia owe him a debt which cannot be overestimated.

Reading the presentations discussing Waters himself, the Wisconsin program and the many links to academic departments around the world, one is struck not only by the wealth of fascinating historical gems, but by the intricacy of developing contacts - branches of the famous 'Aqualumni Tree' described by Lucien Morris.

'Six Degrees of Separation' author John Guare advanced the hypothesis that only six personal contacts (separations) exist between any two individuals on Earth, the number of degrees of separation between any trained physician anesthesiologist and Dr. Waters is much fewer. For myself I count only two. My first professor of anesthesia - Dr. E.A. Pask - was himself a student of Waters in Wisconsin in 1947. This means that every colleague and resident with whom I have had contact can claim only three degrees of separation from the 'Founder of Academic Anesthesiology'. It is hardly surprising that Dr. Water's principles of personal integrity, clinical excellence and research have spread worldwide in the short span of 78 years.

This fascinating volume is sure to be a valuable compendium in the annals of anesthesiology and medical education.

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Sick And You Cared

Tom McCaughy. Wavertree Communications Inc., 2005. 112 pages.

As a lay reviewer, I would look for a book to reveal a lot about its author. This is exactly what I discovered in this interesting publication.

The book is directed in part, towards the parent of a sick child or close family member of an ill person. But it is equally directed to those who are involved in the care of these people. It provides some useful insight into the interactions at play in these unhappy situations. From these observations, one can develop a better and more compassionate medical and personal relationship with the ill.

The book begins with a personal experience with illness, and proceeds through a lifetime of observation and experience in the field of medicine. The author's compassion and love of mankind comes through. He finds good things in many of the family traditions exhibited in the customs of people he has encountered around the world and at home.

The book is concise, with short chapters which generate the feel of a chat with the author on the deck in the summer over a glass of iced tea. The topics shift rather quickly. Anecdotes and memories pop up and demonstrate a point. The scenes skip around the globe from modern, high tech facilities to poor, primitive conditions of developing countries. Old customs are compared favourably with new modern concepts of family interactions.

One chapter, the intensive care unit, stands out as a useful and thoughtful seminar on how to relate to the very sick. For the family, it suggests ways to deal with the frightening environment of the intensive care unit and the staff encountered there, for the good of the sick family member. For the medical staff, it provides insights in how to relate to, accept and facilitate the family interactions. The book deals with pain, acute, chronic and emotional and suggests ways of dealing with each.

The author is a Gold Medal recipient from the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society, and an experienced anesthesiologist who has been head of a tertiary care department. He has had extensive experience in

developing countries as a teacher, a traveller, humanitarian, and observer of mankind. He has a compassion for life and a passion for medicine.

The book reflects the author. It is a special publication to enjoy in quiet moments, savouring one or two chapters at a time.

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ERRATUM

In the Letter to the Editor entitled: "Dexmedetomidine is a useful adjunct for awake intubation" published in the August/September 2005 issue, *Can J Anesth* 2005; 52: 777–8, DEX 1 mg·kg⁻¹ should be DEX 1 µg·kg⁻¹.