

Parturition and Perinatology. Clinical Anesthesia, volume 10, no. 2. By G. F. Marx. Philadelphia, F. A. Davis, 1973. Pages: 216. Price: \$10.00.

The Anesthesiologist, Mother and Newborn. By S. M. SHNIDER AND F. MOYA. Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins, 1974. Pages: 295. Price: \$16.50.

Perinatology, as a medical specialty focused on the mother, fetus, and newborn, is coming of age. Reports of advances in both basic and clinical sciences now appear not only in the obstetric and pediatric literature but also in several new journals dedicated to perinatology. This scattering of the literature makes it unlikely that many of the contributions in this area will come to the attention of the anesthesiologist. Yet, if he is to assume his proper role as a member of the perinatal medical care team, he must keep abreast of this rapidly growing area.

The two books reviewed here both explicitly and implicitly underline the shift in emphasis away from considerations of maternal mortality and morbidity toward greater interest in the physiology and pharmacology of the fetus and the newborn. The responsibilities of the anesthesiologist should encompass more than the application of various drugs and techniques to relieve maternal discomfort during labor and delivery. The obstetric anesthetist must be aware of advances in antenatal diagnosis, in techniques of assessing fetal and placental reserve, the complexities of perinatal pharmacology, and the assessment and care of the newborn. Armed with this knowledge, he will be better prepared to apply his special expertise in achieving the goal of a safe and comfortable childbirth experience for every woman and her child.

Volume 10/2, edited by Gertie F. Marx, is a valuable addition to the anesthesia literature and makes available to the anesthesiologist 15 highly readable reviews of selected areas in perinatology and their implications for clinical practice. Key concepts of maternal physiology and pharmacology are well presented, with extensive and current bibliographies. The section by Martin and Pauerstein on the initiation of labor is particularly well written and of outstanding interest. Three chapters are devoted to careful reviews of biochemical and biophysical techniques of fetal monitoring, and two are devoted to acid-base and blood-gas changes in labor and their effects on the fetus and newborn. In the area of pharmacology, the sections on the thiobarbiturates and the local anesthetics summarize very well the growing body of information with respect to the pharmacokinetics and perinatal effects of these widely used drugs. Less well done is the review of analgesia during labor, in that little new information is added to what has been documented extensively elsewhere, nor is there sufficient emphasis on the major unanswered questions in this area. The only aspect of neonatal homeostasis that is considered is the review by Evans of thermal care of the infant at birth. In sum, what the contributors have set out to do has by and

large been well accomplished, but by no means all of the key issues of concern to the obstetric anesthetist are discussed.

The collection edited by S. M. Shnider and F. Moya consists of 31 short articles (average 8 pages) based on presentations at a postgraduate seminar held in Miami in 1972. It is divided into four sections: Basic Principles in Obstetric Anesthesia, Controversial Aspects of Obstetric Anesthesia, The Fetus and Newborn, and Mechanical Ventilation of the Newborn Infant. As is generally the case in books of this genre, there is much to praise and much to criticize. In the first section, Bonica does his usual excellent and thorough job of reviewing maternal physiology during pregnancy and anesthesia. Various other aspects of perinatal pharmacology are then briefly presented. Of special interest is Smith's discussion of the public health aspects of inhalation anesthesia in obstetrics. After reviewing the role of anesthesia in maternal mortality and the inadequacies of anesthesia coverage in obstetrics, Smith makes a strong plea that something be done about this long recognized and still unsolved problem. He highlights the continued controversy about endotracheal intubation in the obstetric patient, but unfortunately leaves the reader in a quandary with the debatable conclusion that there is no room for inflexible routine. How is one to decide whether or not to intubate the trachea in a parturient given general anesthesia if such an action is "the best protection against aspiration of vomitus" on the one hand, but the only guidelines offered are that the decision to intubate "must be reached only after considering mother, infant, obstetrician, anesthetist, and the needs and limitations of each?" Should general anesthesia ever be administered by anyone who cannot intubate a trachea? Smith's detailed discussion of the problem unfortunately ends without seriously coming to grips with a solution.

By contrast, Marx, in her discussion of the prevention and treatment of aspiration, suggests that danger can best be prevented by the use of regional anesthesia, inhalation analgesia, or endotracheal intubation "whenever inhalation anesthesia is required." So the controversy continues and remains, unresolved, because of the lack of comprehensive and reliable epidemiologic data on which to base rational decisions in this area. Underlying both discussions is the notion that the problem would probably cease to exist were competent, fully-trained anesthesiologists available for every obstetric patient as they are for surgical patients.

The strongest section of Shnider and Moya's book is the one entitled "The Fetus and the Newborn," which is highlighted by excellent, brief summaries of such subjects as the intrauterine environment of the fetus, antepartum evaluation of the fetus, intrauterine asphyxia, and neonatal resuscitation. An excellent review of the current status of the respiratory distress syndrome is presented in the Jose E. Usubiaga Memorial Lecture by Stanley James.

Less useful is the concluding section on mechanical

ical ventilation of the newborn, which contains a great deal of repetition and presents little basis for comparing results among the various techniques described. Much of the rest of the book, dealing with obstetric anesthesia itself, is composed of review material less well analyzed than in the Marx book, interspersed with some original unpublished observations. There is little in-depth, critical evaluation, but rather a rapid kaleidoscopic tour through a large number of subjects with the focus constantly shifting.

Of the two works, Marx's is the more consistent and intensive in presenting selected issues in perinatology. The book by Shnider and Moya is an

attempt to cover a great deal of ground in a constricting format, suffers from a lack of perspective and internal unity, but does offer to the anesthesiologist some valuable insights into fetal and neonatal function not presented in Marx's book. Neither compendium is entirely adequate by itself, but together the two provide the interested anesthesiologist with a valuable progress report in this rapidly growing area of medicine.

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Books Received

Title	Author/Editor	Publisher	Pages	Price
Narcotic Antagonists (<i>Advances in Biochemical Psychopharmacology. Volume 8</i>)	Braude, Harris, May, Smith, and Villarreal	Raven Press 15 West 84th Street New York, NY 10024	592	\$29.50
<i>Advances in Neurology. Volume 4: International Symposium on Pain</i>	John J. Bonica	Raven Press	850	\$36.00
<i>Benzodiazepines in Clinical Practice</i>	David J. Greenblatt and Richard I. Shader	Raven Press	305	?
<i>Phenothiazines and Structurally Related Drugs. Volume 9</i>	Irene S. Forrest, C. Jelleff Carr, Earl Usdin	Raven Press	818	?
<i>Serotonin—New Vistas. Histochemistry and Pharmacology—Advances in Biochemical Psychopharmacology. Volume 10</i>	E. Costa, G. L. Gessa, M. Sandler	Raven Press	329	\$19.75
<i>Serotonin—New Vistas. Biochemistry and Behavioral and Clinical Studies—Advances in Biochemical Psychopharmacology. Volume 11</i>	E. Costa, G. L. Gessa, M. Sandler	Raven Press	438	\$19.75
<i>Neurochemical Basis of Pharmacology</i>	(not available at the moment)	—	—	—
<i>Loaded Breathing</i>	L. D. Pengelly, A. S. Rebusck, E. J. M. Campbell	Longman Incorporated 72 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10011	254	\$12.50
<i>Pediatric Respiratory Therapy</i>	Lough, Doershuk, and Stern	Year Book Medical Publishers, Inc. 35 East Wacker Drive Chicago, Illinois	202	\$ 9.95
<i>Perinatal Pharmacology; Problems and Priorities</i>	Dancis and Hwang	Raven Press	228	\$19.75
<i>Pain Relief in Labour. Second edition. A Handbook for Midwives</i>	Donald D. Moir	Longman, Incorporated	150	\$ 4.50

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