

**Fundamentos de Anestesiología.** Second edition.

By C. L. ALONSO. Mexico, La Prensa Medica Mexicana, 1976. Pages: 320. Price: PNS.

This is a book written in Spanish and intended to serve the needs of medical and dental students, as well as those of residents and trained anesthesiologists. The text, divided into 31 chapters, deals with general and regional anesthesia, obstetrical anesthesia, water and electrolytes, recovery room, intensive care unit, respiratory therapy, pediatric and geriatric anesthesia, special techniques, and explosion and electrocution hazards.

The problem of satisfying such a wide readership and of condensing such a vast amount of information into a scant 300 pages led to a rather superficial treatment of many topics and to a marked variation in emphasis and detail. The result is a book that will hardly serve everybody's needs. Students and residents will wish that the author had been more felicitous in relating the theoretical and practical aspects of anesthesia to the basic sciences. Trained anesthesiologists will long for greater depth in most topics and wish that the relevance of opinions and facts had been supported by more frequent reference to published work. Overall, one wishes the author had used more lucid language and more consistent terminology.

The book is well produced, carefully proofread, and adequately indexed. It is unfortunate that, owing to inadequate legends and to a lack of explanation in the text, some of the figures are of little value. In summary, although this reviewer does not know what other anesthesiology books in Spanish are available in Latin America, he would be hard pressed to recommend this one as a satisfactory textbook for medical students and anesthesia trainees.

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**Critical Care Medicine Handbook.** EDITED BY

M. H. WEIL AND H. SHUBIN. Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins, 1974. Pages: 432. Price: \$18.50.

Many problems encountered by the critical care physician are presented in this compendium edited by the organizers of the University of Southern California Post Graduate Course entitled "Critical Care Medicine and Circulatory Shock." At the outset, the editors state that little effort was made to edit potentially different points of view in order to expose issues that are considered controversial. The manuscripts were solicited from the various speakers at the course, organized into categories (although not edited for style and content), and published. As a result, in quality this text is more uneven than most multiauthored works. It is less a handbook than a potential reference source for specific questions of medical care, some of which

will be contained within the volume and some of which will not, depending on the quality of the chapter.

The book is divided into eight sections as follows: respiratory crises, cardiovascular crises, shock and trauma, fluid/electrolytes/renal, CNS crises, and infection. The ninth and tenth sections combine a potpourri of unrelated but important topics such as ENT, obstetric, gynecologic and venemous emergencies, DIC and organ donation; administrative, safety and ethical considerations are also discussed.

By far the longest chapter, "Standards for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiac Care," has already been published as a supplement to the Journal of the American Medical Association, volume 227, 1974. Without counting this chapter of 58 pages, there are 67 separate chapters within 365 pages of material.

Some chapters broadly survey their fields, others review the literature in greater or lesser depth, and others present current experimental data. Some chapters offer bibliographies while others don't. Many chapters are superficial and reek of a cookbook style. Several "chapters" are literally one or two pages in length. Some of the text is directed to the emergency room physician and would be of little interest to the anesthesiologist. But, in a multidisciplinary field such as critical care medicine, crossover of specialty lines is necessary and desirable. The index is appropriately detailed, an extremely important aid in locating information that would be otherwise difficult to find.

This book should be available as a reference work to those currently involved or planning to participate in intensive care, but I see little reason for the individual reader to purchase it for his own library, unless he takes the time to familiarize himself with the book, and finds those chapters that contain useful, detailed and well organized information.

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**Atlas of Electroencephalography in Coma and Cerebral Death.** BY D. R. BENNETT, J. R. HUGHES, J. KOREIN, J. K. MERLIS, AND C. SUTTER. New York, Raven Press, 1975. Pages: 254. Price: \$55.00.

This compendium of more than 200 illustrations is one of a series of reports resulting from a two-year National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke collaborative field research investigation of cerebral death begun in 1971. At nine participating centers, 503 patients in coma (their criteria for admission to the study: "(a) age over one year, (b) cerebral unresponsivity, and (c) arrest of spontaneous respirations for at least 15 minutes") were studied, of whom approximately