

ology and pharmacology. The authors' writing styles were not extensively edited "to keep the book from having a MAC value of 3." Certainly the book has achieved these purposes. Although one might argue that chapter-to-chapter continuity and cohesiveness might have been improved by further editing, each section may be read independently and they may be read in almost any order, but at the expense of considerable duplication of material in certain chapters. This was permitted, as Katz mentions in the preface, "to provide different ways of looking at the same things." However, this reviewer strongly recommends that Chapter 1 be read first, as it supplies generic information and sets the tone for the chapters that follow.

The comparative *laissez-faire* of the editor indicates that the quality of each chapter depends entirely upon the input of its authors. There is some variability in the excellence of chapters. The works of Waud and Waud, Riker, and Walts stand out, and make the book worth purchasing. The comprehensive review by Riker of the actions of junctionally-active drugs upon the motor nerve terminal is certainly the best on the subject that the reviewer has encountered. The initial chapter on pharmacology and physiology by the Wauds leans heavily upon electrophysiology and receptor pharmacology. Structure-activity relations and the chemistry of junctional and receptor pharmacology are treated only briefly by Waser. The important side effects of relaxants, involving other pharmacologic actions of these agents, are discussed in a clinical fashion by Walts in his chapter on complications. The value of the latter section lies in its thoroughness. It is doubtful whether Walts overlooked any reference. Nearly as complete is Miller's presentation of the interaction of relaxants with various physiologic and pharmacologic factors.

One might be overly critical in noting that Stovner's description of the use of relaxants in Europe rambles and is largely repetitive of material contained in other chapters, or in questioning whether the use of relaxants in pediatrics, obstetrics, and the intensive care unit is so importantly different as to require treatment in separate chapters. On the other hand, it might be argued that this separation is valuable to the relatively uninitiated.

If we remember that this book is aimed principally at clinicians, and that practitioners vary markedly in their levels of training, experience, interest in and knowledge of relaxants, then the value of the book is placed in perspective. The material is broad and deep enough to be instructive at many levels. The medical student or beginning resident may find it difficult reading in certain areas unless he has prepared himself with some basic information. The knowledgeable practitioner and clinical scientist will find this book an encyclopedia of information on relaxant drugs, an excellent

reference worth purchasing if he can afford the (by the editor's own admission) high price.

JOHN J. SAVARESE, M.D.
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Physiological Basis of Anaesthesiology. Theory and Practice. EDITED BY W. W. MUSHIN, J. W. SEVERINGHAUS, M. TIENGO, AND S. GOHINI. Piccin Medical Books, 1975. Pages: 367. Price: \$16.00.

This book is a compendium of 21 papers, each presented as an individually written chapter, from the First International Seminar on the Physiological Basis of Anesthesia, Milan, 1973. In general, it deals with physiology of respiration and cardiovascular function.

The individual chapters range from excellent to mediocre. Some, such as those on mechanics of the chest wall, small-airway closure, and ventilation-perfusion relationships, are outstanding, comprehensive, and informative reviews. Many of the remaining chapters are less well-organized, are of minimal scientific or clinical interest, and tend to detract from the total quality of the text.

The figures and photographs are generally well reproduced, with adequate legends, although in several instances incomplete translation from the original language makes interpretation difficult. The references are generally limited in number and also often appear to be somewhat outdated. There are numerous typographical and spelling errors throughout the text.

Unfortunately, the title is misleading, since the book is not an organized presentation of basic concepts but rather covers selected aspects of circulatory and respiratory function in both normal and disease states. This text should be useful to anyone interested in several of the diverse aspects of physiology that are considered, but not to those attempting to develop basic concepts in clinical physiology.

ROGER S. WILSON, M.D.
Department of Anesthesiology
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Paediatric Intensive Care. Second edition. By K. D. ROBERTS AND J. M. EDWARDS. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott, 1975. Pages: 307. Price: \$20.00.

Drs. Roberts and Edwards have succeeded in their aim of providing a book that makes "clear to resident doctors and senior nurses the basic principles underlying the care of the critically ill child."

The authors have provided a rather complete