

BOOK REVIEWS

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Pain. EDITED BY HOWARD L. FIELDS. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1987. Pages: 354. Price: \$39.00.

This book was written with the purpose of "providing a foundation for deeper understanding," primarily of pain mechanisms, but clinical management is also included. The goal is superbly accomplished by Dr. Fields, who is a recognized authority in the field of pain. His writing is consistently clear and precise. He does not attempt to be exhaustive in his coverage of all topics, yet is not so sketchy that the reader has little to apply to the management of patients. The text is aptly supplemented by useful figures, tables, and illustrative case histories. The references are appropriately ample and current.

Pain is a well-organized book. The first six chapters cover the mechanisms of pain from an anatomic, physiologic, and pharmacologic point of view, and intentionally comprise one-half of the book. This material is presented in a logical pattern, starting with peripheral events and progressing back to the central nervous system. A distinct strength of the entire book is that the discussion of neural mechanisms is not presented in isolation from clinical events. Rather, there is a concurrent illustration of the relevance of the mechanisms by reference to clinical syndromes. This amalgamation of basic science with clinical phenomena allows the practitioner to develop an appreciation for the probable causes of a patient's pain, such that the pain can be adequately explained to the patient, as can the rationale for the proposed treatment. It is hoped that this mutual understanding will enhance therapeutic compliance and effectiveness.

Two middle chapters of the book deal adequately with the psychology of pain and the necessity of establishing an accurate, precise diagnosis. The point is made "that current medical training does not equip any single physician to evaluate the full range of problems that could be producing or perpetuating pain in any given patient." The subspecialty referral system results in a patient being managed with techniques most familiar to that specialist. A thrust of this book is to encourage a more communal understanding of patients with pain, based on an appreciation for current neural mechanisms, and to then foster cooperativity of specialists in evaluation and management. Because pain management encompasses almost all fields of medicine, and Dr. Field's presentation of pain mechanisms is so concise, this book will appeal to a broad range of health care professionals. They will also be enlightened by the chapter that endorses the contemporary theory that the evaluation of patients with pain, and especially those whose complaints are more chronic and persistent, needs to be systematic and thorough. Only after establishing a diagnosis that integrates the somatic and psychological aspects of pain can anyone begin to provide appropriate therapy.

Two chapters are devoted to the use of pharmacologic agents for pain control. These sensitive issues are presented in a forthright, realistic, and non-judgmental manner. The discussions of the physiologic and psychologic mechanisms of pain in the preceding chapters helps the reader to most clearly understand the wisdom of the pharmacologic choices available. That one cannot treat all pain with medications is acknowledged by the inclusion of a chapter on non-pharmacologic options for pain management. This text is brief in comparison to the attention given to other topics in the book, but this is not a drawback. The book is not meant to be a weighty compendium of all pain management strategies, but, rather, an elaboration of pain mechanisms as they relate to clinical phenomena. The integration of this information in the preceding chapters provides a rational basis for the various forms of treatment. This emphasis is more crucial to the book than an extensive discussion of the specific therapeutic options to which the reader is appropriately referred.

This clinically oriented book is well written, and presents current information on the pathophysiology of pain in a lucid, understandable format. This material is up-to-date, yet acknowledgment is given to the fact that this is an ever-changing field. Dr. Fields is an authoritative clinical scientist who is actively participating in both basic science and clinical research. He has provided a valuable contribution to the contemporary literature. This book will be of great interest to any health care practitioner who is involved in pain management, and to pain research scientists who are curious to know how their important work contributes to clinical medicine.

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Manual of Anesthesia for Emergency Surgery. EDITED BY J. H. DONEGAN. New York, Churchill Livingstone, 1987. Pages: 403. Price: \$29.00.

This is another in a series of "manuals" recently offered by Churchill Livingstone. As such, it declares itself as a "book of lists," rather than a full text. Physically, it is a relatively small book, but is packed full of useful information in its 403 pages.

Its list of contributors reads like a "Who's Who" in anesthesia, and Dr. Donegan has done a superb job of recruiting a collection of top authorities to contribute to this book. In her preface, the editor indicates that the book is intended to be "in outline form for quick and easy access to specific information." This aim is admirably met, and the book will prove useful to anesthesiology students, residents, and consultants in the practice of emergency anesthesia.

Because of the nature of the book, several aspects, such as "rapid sequence induction," appear several times by various contributing authors. However, this repetition is in context and appropriate, and does not detract from the quality of the book.

The book opens with an overview of anesthesiology practice in emergency surgery that is complete and offers an excellent base for the rest of the book. Fourteen chapters on anesthesia management of specific subspecialty surgical situations follows. I was particularly impressed with the chapter on emergency ophthalmic procedures, which could serve as a complete text on ophthalmic anesthesia in any book. On page 35, the author suggests that 1.5-2.0 mg/kg of pancuronium is an appropriate dose. This is a simple typographical error.

The chapter on neurosurgery is complete and an excellent review of the subject. The chapter on otolaryngological and facial trauma considers every possibility, and is an excellent presentation of the dilemma that often faces the anesthesiologist when managing the traumatized airway. The chapter on thoracic emergencies presents one of the clearest discussions on double-lumen tubes I have seen. Chapter 6 is on emergency cardiac surgery. The authors disclaim that this is a text, and then proceed to write a superb text style chapter. However, they concentrate on coronary bypass, and not on typical trauma subjects, such as tamponade, on which the paragraphs are short and inadequate.

Further excellent chapters in the first half of the book include vascular injury, which contains an informative section on aortic aneurysms, and abdominal and urological injuries, which could also serve as a mini precis of the whole book. The chapter on pediatric surgery, once again, is excellent, and includes a very readable summary of the principles of pediatric anesthesia.