BOOK REVIEW


Edited by Enid Gilbert-Barness.
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2245 pages, $399.

The original “Potter’s” textbooks (1952, 1961, and 1977) set the standard for authoritative works in pediatric pathology and were based on experience from over 10,000 autopsies performed by the late Dr. Edith Potter. Dr. Potter’s legacy continued in the first edition of Potter’s Pathology of the Fetus and Infant, which was a multiauthored, 2 volume set edited by Dr. Gilbert-Barness (1997). Ten years later, the second edition of “Potter’s” arrives significantly revised and updated with the addition of 31 new contributors. Together with the previous authors, the list reads like a “who’s who” in the world of pediatric and perinatal pathology. The combined years of experience provided in these volumes is likely to approximate, if not exceed, its number of pages. Further enhancements for this edition are an abundance of high quality color images, diagrams, and illustrations plus the inclusion of a beautifully crafted CD-ROM for each volume.

Volume 1 covers basic fetal/perinatal pathology and includes I. “Pathogenesis of Fetal and Perinatal Disorders”, II. “Examination of the Fetus and Infant”, and III. “Major Anomalies of External Anatomy or In-Situ Relationships”. Chapters on pathogenesis successfully incorporate recent advances in molecular genetics without compromising the wisdom and experience of the prior edition. For example, Chapter 5 (Chromosomal Anomalies) takes the reader from classical diagnostic cytogenetics to contemporary methods of dual color fluorescent in situ hybridization and comparative genomic hybridization, each being beautifully illustrated and explained. Many chapters have been completely revised, including those covering placental pathology and the fetal perinatal autopsy. The latter chapter contains an abundance of useful normative data that could have been appended at the end of the book for more easy access. Forensic pathology and sudden infant death are covered in a comprehensive and authoritative fashion and include important nervous system issues.

Volume 2 contains a complete and thorough treatment of organ system pathology by many luminaries in their fields. As a practicing academic neuropathologist, it is my opinion that the sections devoted to pediatric neuropathology would alone justify the cost of this book. These volumes should not only be on the shelves of pediatric pathologists and pediatricians but should reach all pathologists and advanced trainees whose practices or subspecialty interests include fetal or perinatal pathology. However, this textbook won’t stay on shelves for long. In busy pathology departments where the most useful textbooks tend to “disappear,” one could easily predict that the words “Where’s Potter’s?” will be uttered frequently. For this reason, you’d better get two!

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