

# BOOK REVIEW

Edward Lowenstein, M.D., Editor

**Clinical Anesthesia in Neurosurgery.** EDITED BY ELIZABETH A. M. FROST, M.D. Stoneham, Massachusetts, Butterworth Publishers, 1984. Pages: 480. Price: \$49.95.

In recent years, we have seen the appearance of several new or revised textbooks on "neuroanesthesia." None of these has been entirely satisfactory, either because of omissions (either in terms of clinical practice or, more commonly, physiology or pharmacology), or because of a rigid, narrow, or foreign viewpoint. Therefore, this new book was eagerly awaited. Unfortunately, it suffers from many of the same problems noted above. It clearly does not fill the need for a *comprehensive*, "state of the art" text.

The faults in this book are immediately evident. For example, the foreword is written in a style so flowery as to border on the ludicrous. ("Years of battle will bring the accolade, but the jousts are difficult and brutally demanding.") This book is undoubtedly the most poorly illustrated book that I have yet encountered, both in terms of the selection of figures and their reproduction. The chapter on the history of neuroanesthesia is excellent. The subsequent chapter on cerebral hemodynamics devotes five pages to a vessel-by-vessel description of vascular anatomy, which could easily have been summarized in a figure (a figure which, in fact, appears four chapters later), but only one page to the techniques for the measurement of cerebral blood flow. Only four references to the subject, none of which is more recent than 1968, are provided. The effects of anesthetic drugs on cerebral blood flow and metabolic rate are presented in an almost painfully superficial fashion. The chapter, "Physiology of Intracranial Pressure," is generally adequate and basic, but includes a summary of the anesthetic care of the patient with intracranial hypertension that is simplistic at best. Dr. Grundy's contribution on electrophysiologic monitoring is solid, although very similar to material that has appeared in several other publications. It fails to consider in depth such subjects as the pro's and

con's of electroencephalographic monitoring for carotid surgery. This topic is not considered at all in the chapter on cerebrovascular disease, which also dismisses the "shunt *versus* no-shunt" argument with a single sentence. Anesthetic management of patients with carotid disease, aneurysms, and so forth, is presented only in a "how we do it" format. By contrast, the chapter on posterior fossa surgery is comprehensive and provides a satisfactory review of problems related to air embolism and monitoring as well as a useful summary of surgical problems encountered.

There are a number of other excellent chapters (although some have little to do with anesthesia). These include anesthesia for neuroradiology, spine surgery, transphenoidal hypophysectomy, pediatric neurosurgery, the management of head and spinal cord trauma, and brain death. However, there are certain "oddities." For example, why is the subject of cimetidine prophylaxis and aspiration considered in a chapter on peripheral nerve surgery? Why is positioning—a major problem and risk factor in neurosurgery—not even mentioned in the index and covered only in rudimentary fashion throughout the book? Why do the authors repeatedly suggest that isoflurane has clinically relevant cerebral-protective properties, despite the lack of supportive evidence? A cursory reading of this book would suggest that isoflurane is the *only* anesthetic agent indicated for use in any and all neurosurgical situations.

This book presents only a practical—and somewhat parochial—review of clinical care. The major strength lies in the discussion of the clinical problems encountered in certain less common situations. However, I would suggest that its contents be carefully reviewed for personal relevance before purchase.

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## Books Received July 1–September 30, 1985

Title & Edition	Author/Editor	Publisher		
		Address, Name	Pages	Price
Update in Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine	J. L. Vincent	New York Springer-Verlag	304	\$ 31.00
Labat's Regional Anesthesia	John Adriani, M.D.	St. Louis Green Publishing Co.	744	\$ 75.00
Effects of Anesthesia	B. G. Covino H. A. Fozzard K. Rehder G. Strichartz	Baltimore Williams and Wilkins	224	\$ 39.95
American Blood Banks—Technical Manual	Frances K. Widmann, M.D.	Arlington, VA American Association of Blood Banks	515	\$ 35.00

**Books Received, July 1–September 30, 1985 (Continued)**

Title & Edition	Author/Editor	Publisher		Pages	Price
		Address, Name			
<b>Precis d'anesthésie Loco-Regionale</b>	P. Gauthier-LaFaye	Paris	Masson Editeur	352	390 francs
<b>Regional Anesthesia—Techniques and Clinical Application</b>	Harold Carron Gregg Korbon John Rowlingson	Orlando, FL	Grune and Stratton	198	\$ 39.50
<b>The Surgical Neonate—Evaluation and Care</b>	Howard C. Filston Robert J. Izant, Jr.	New York	Appleton-Century-Crofts	300	\$ 34.95
<b>Practical Anaesthesia for Surgical Emergencies</b>	Peter W. Jackson	Dobbs Ferry, NY	Sheridan House	122	\$ 17.95
<b>Sleep—Neurotransmitters and Neuromodulators</b>	A. Wauquier J. M. Gaillard J. M. Monti M. Radulovacki	New York	Raven Press	335	\$ 49.50
<b>Anaesthetics, Resuscitation and Intensive Care</b>	Donald Campbell Alastair A. Spence	New York	Churchill Livingstone	254	\$ 14.00
<b>Hammersmith Cardiology Workshop Series</b>	Attilio Maseri	New York	Raven Press	244	\$ 54.50
<b>Monitoring in Anesthesia and Critical Care Medicine</b>	Casey D. Blitt	New York	Churchill Livingstone	740	\$ 79.50
<b>The Elements of Graphing Data</b>	William S. Cleveland	Monterey, CA	Wadsworth Advanced Books and Software	323	\$ 27.95
<b>Intensive Care Manual</b>	T. E. Ott	Stoneham, MA	Butterworth Publishers	463	\$ 29.95
<b>Perioperative Cardiac Dysfunction</b>	Joe R. Utley	Baltimore	Williams and Wilkins	289	\$49.00
<b>Pulmonary Development</b>	George H. Nelson	New York	Marcel Dekker	526	\$ 75.00
<b>A Physician's Guide to Computers and Computing</b>	John M. Allswang	New York	Appleton-Century-Crofts	208	\$ 25.00
<b>1985 Yearbook of Critical Care Medicine</b>	Rogers, Allo, Dean, Givia, McPherson, Michael, Traystman	Chicago	Year Book Medical Publishers	493	\$ 44.95
<b>Perioperative Cardiac Dysrhythmias</b>	John L. Atlee, III	Chicago	Year Book Medical Publishers	451	\$ 49.95

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Title & Edition	Author/Editor	Publisher		
		Address, Name	Pages	Price
<b>Computers in Critical Care and Pulmonary Medicine</b>	Peter M. Osswald	New York Springer-Verlag	340	98 (DM)
<b>Physiology of the Heart and Circulation</b>	Robert C. Little	Chicago Year Book Medical Publishers	360	\$ 21.95
<b>Care of the Postoperative Surgical Patient</b>	John A. R. Smith John Watkins	Stoneham, MA Butterworth Publishing	273	\$ 59.95
<b>Atlas of Regional Anesthesia</b>	Jordan Katz	New York Appleton Century Crofts	203	\$ 75.00

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