■ REVIEWS OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

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ICU Recall, 3rd Edition. Edited by Curtis G. Tribble, M.D., Charles E. Hobson, M.D., M.H.A., and Nelson L. Thaemert, M.D. Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2008. Pages: 604. Price: $39.95.

Critical care medicine is challenging; patients are ill, emotions are intense, hours are long, and the clinical questions are difficult. Much of the learning is done at the bedside, and rarely is there time to sit down and read.

As a medical student, I remember evaluating my first postcardiac surgical patient—trying to figure out where the various lines, tubes, and pumps were leading, interpreting novel hemodynamic variables, feeling uneasy about the potential for an imminent cardiac arrest, and all the while receiving multiple requests to replace potassium. A busy intensive care unit (ICU) is frequently chaotic for young physicians. Efficiency and organization are essential to productive learning.

The third edition of *ICU Recall* by Tribble *et al.* is a concise study guide which is well organized and easy to read. The book is written in a question-and-answer format, totals 600 pages, and fits in your coat pocket. An electronic version for a personal digital assistant is also available. It is organized into four sections.

The initial section is an overview of various topics, including airway management, pharmacology, procedures, monitoring, imaging, and "the code." This section helps demystify the aforementioned tubes and lines; where they are (hopefully) going, what the numbers coming from those lines mean, and what to do when a code occurs. Section II is divided into organ systems, with extensive discussion of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Section III covers systemic processes such as sepsis, fluids and electrolytes, and nutrition. The final section covers specific ICU populations such as burns, trauma, surgical subspecialties, and pediatrics. A bookmark is included that has a sample outline for an ICU progress note and can double as a cover for the answers as you read the questions.

The book is useful. It covers a wide range of topics, is well organized into largely self-contained chapters, uses basic illustrations effectively (including sample electrocardiograms and ventilator waveforms), and is portable. The questions are salient and written in a style reminiscent of questions posed on daily rounds. The answers are concise and in list or short paragraph form. The emphasis is on the cardiovascular and pulmonary systems, which are the cornerstones of critical care.

ICU Recall, 3rd Edition is not a textbook. Although reasonably complete, certain topics are not emphasized or do not lend themselves to the format. For instance, delirium, which may affect a large portion of ICU patients and may increase morbidity and mortality, is not extensively discussed. Noninvasive mechanical ventilation is another topic which is mentioned briefly. However, its use is increasing and an expanded section including modes, settings, troubleshooting, and evidence-based indications would be useful.

Some readers may not enjoy the question-and-answer style in which the text is written. Pick up the book and spend a few minutes reading a chapter—you will quickly understand its organization and whether the style fits your needs. Finally, there are few references. Certain chapters (*e.g.*, Nutrition) list and comment on evidence-based data, and I would have liked to have seen more in other chapters.

Overall, *ICU Recall, 3rd Edition* is a remarkably thorough review book that is easy to read, covers a diversity of critical care topics, and is portable. It provides an opportunity for efficient learning while providing clinical care. It does not replace standard ICU textbooks, but I would recommend it as an additional source of quick information and review to any medical student or resident physician rotating through the ICU.

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Anesthesiology Keywords Review. Edited by Raj K. Modak, M.D. Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2008. Pages: 576. Price: $99.00.

The work facing the authors of a board review book is challenging indeed. The vast breadth of knowledge comprising the field of anesthesiology must be covered in adequate depth, while simultaneously avoiding getting bogged down in unnecessary minutiae. Moreover, many such books have already been published—some admirably succeeding in their mission to concisely review the field, others doing so less successfully. The latter tomes generally fail either because of being too superficial in their coverage, or because of presenting material in levels of detail more suitable for a textbook.

The authors of the first edition of *Anesthesiology Keywords Review*, published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, thus faced a difficult task: To successfully tread the line between conciseness and detail, while also somehow differentiating their text from the reviews already in existence. To this end, they take a somewhat different approach: The work is in large part written by residents of the editor's home program, based on an internal project designed as a tool for resident education and examination review. Having recently graduated from a residency program that used similar resident-authored keyword reviews, the significant resident involvement in creating the material and the compilation of these efforts into a cohesive board review book is commendable.

From an organizational standpoint, each of the 316 keyword entries is based on the keyword feedback provided from the annual American Board of Anesthesiology-American Society of Anesthesiologists in-training examinations. An interesting and unique aspect of the book is the multiple indices the authors have developed. Three separate indices are arranged alphabetically by section (anatomy, anesthesia processes, cardiovascular, and so forth), by topic (airway, back pain, carbon monoxide, and so forth), and by rotation (cardiac, general, neuro, and so forth). These multiple groupings aid in classifying and organizing the wide array of material presented. However, the presence of multiple classifications of the same keyword, while understandable for the sake of completeness, makes the indices fairly lengthy and detracts somewhat from their usefulness. The physical layout of the book in a strictly alphabetical format, rather than according to one of these indices, also makes finding desired topics more difficult, as there is no corresponding alphabetical index.

The visual layout of the book is appealing and well designed. Each individual keyword is cross-referenced with the section index mentioned above. Another useful feature is the listing of key points at the beginning of each topic to help summarize the material. Most of the discussions strike a nice balance between conciseness and detail, although a few do contain superfluous information, such as the history of cocaine. Each keyword also contains suggested readings at the end if the reader desires further clarification on a particular topic, a nice supplement to the brief summaries presented. The majority of these references are to established anesthesia textbooks such as Miller,[1] Barash,[2] Stoelting,[3] and Morgan.[4] Graphs, tables, and drawings nicely complement the text when needed to further explain a point or topic.

In addition to the book itself, an interactive Web site has been developed for online use. The site contains the full contents of the book and is searchable. It is also indexed by section in the same manner as the hard copy. However, the organization of the index could be improved to increase its usability. For example, grouping all keywords for "Anesthesia Processes" under one heading rather than having them scattered throughout the index would both streamline the index and increase its usefulness.

A few other criticisms deserve mention. First, as stated in the book's preface, some keywords are ambiguous, and divining the question writers' intent can sometimes be difficult. As a result, some of the