

BOOK REVIEWS

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Basic and Clinical Sciences in Anesthesiology. By ARTHUR B. TARROW, M.D., AND JAMES C. ERICKSON III, M.D. Philadelphia, Lydette Publishing Company, 1980. Pages 563. Price: \$22.00

Few questions obsess the student's mind more than that age old intellectual quest, "What's going to be on the test?" To the chagrin of exam-designing psychologists, doing well in a written multiple-choice examination does involve some degree of exam-taking skill. In answer to these and other needs, a variety of pretest materials are now available to assist the student in preparing for board or in-training examinations. *Basic and Clinical Sciences in Anesthesiology* is one such manual.

The workbook is divided into basic sciences (subdivided into physiology, pathophysiology, anatomy, pharmacology, chemistry, and physics, totaling 1,233 questions) and applications of the basic sciences (subdivided into anesthetic techniques, case presentations, and morbidity and mortality reviews, totaling 741 questions). Six types of multiple-choice questions are offered, each followed by the correct answer, one or more references, and when appropriate, an explanation. References are made to most anesthetic texts. The literature references date from 1923 through June 1979. A detailed cross-referenced index is provided so that the student can easily locate groups of questions on a specific topic. Each chapter is prefaced by an outline of contents, again allowing areas of interest to be identified.

Questions are of high quality and are aimed at the consultant level. A medical student might be frustrated attempting to review for a clerkship examination using this workbook.

Content includes a wide sweep of the literature in addition to "standard texts." The basic science section is stronger as the answers tend to be entirely objective, while the clinical section frequently fails to account for differing points of view and controversy in the management of patients. This weakness is enhanced by failure to provide page numbers of reference texts, thus making it difficult for the reader to evaluate and confirm the offered explanation. The text is easy to read and well-printed. However, it is large, bulky, and in loose-leaf form. Decreasing its size and weight would be helpful. More detailed references as mentioned, would be useful. I would have personally preferred answers be printed at the end of each chapter rather than below each question.

On balance this is a worthwhile review book, well-organized and broad in scope. It can be recommended for students of anesthesia interested in continued self-evaluation. How well it will prepare an individual for the written boards is an open question.

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