

# Book Reviews

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**Anesthesia for Obstetrics.** By SOL M. SNIDER AND GERSHON LEVINSON. Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins, 1979. Pages: 456. Price \$35.

This is a comprehensive, authoritative, up-to-date textbook of obstetric anesthesiology. Although there are 17 contributing authors, the editors have insured a clear and consistent style which is easy and enjoyable to read. It contains much material from an earlier book co-edited by Dr. Snider (*The Anesthesiologist, Mother, and Newborn*), but it is not simply a new edition of the earlier book. The five sections and 28 chapters are logically organized such that information on any particular topic is easily found. In this regard the book has already been useful in our residency program. When we needed an answer to the question, "Is it good or bad to hyperventilate a patient under general anesthesia for cesarean section?", we found the answer on page 262, where an excellent diagram outlines the mechanism by which maternal hyperventilation produces fetal acidosis. An outstanding feature of the book is the presence of many such diagrams, illustrations, tables, and graphs. When we had a pregnant patient who needed anesthesia for an appendectomy, we found recommendations for management of anesthesia in chapter 21, "Anesthesia for Operations during Pregnancy." This chapter and a chapter on anesthesia for the pregnant cardiac patient will be useful to all anesthesiologists regardless of their special fields of interest. After reading parts of the book in this way, several residents have purchased copies.

In general, the authors have assumed that the reader has a knowledge of basic anesthetic practice and desires additional information concerning pregnant patients. The first section lays the basic groundwork in physiology and pharmacology, discussing the impact of maternal physiologic alterations upon the management of anesthesia, and upon the uteroplacental circulation, uterine activity and labor, and the effects of drugs upon the fetus and neonate. Section two begins with an interesting chapter on psychological aspects. The author treats the controversial subjects of natural childbirth, Lamaze and Leboyer methods, and family-centered maternity care in a sensitive and sensible manner. Other chapters discuss systemic medication, regional analgesia, local anesthetic agents, and inhalational analgesia and anesthesia for vaginal delivery. Section three deals with complicated obstetrics, and begins with a detailed and extensively referenced review of the pharmacologic therapy for preterm labor. We found this part of the chapter somewhat tedious, but the second part, "Anesthetic Considerations In Pre-term Labor," is quite valuable. Chapters on anesthetic considerations for abnormal positions and presentations, multiple births, and the pregnant cardiac patient follow in logical sequence. The chapter on preeclampsia/eclampsia engages the regional anesthesia vs. general anesthesia controversy and stands firmly for regional anesthesia. The descrip-

tion of the coagulation mechanism in the chapter on coagulation disorders is as lucid as any we have seen. The section concludes with a chapter on antepartum and postpartum hemorrhage and a chapter on anesthesia for cesarean section. Various techniques of anesthesia are described. However, the student of anesthesiology will need to refer to more basic texts for detailed information about techniques of epidural and caudal analgesia. Section four discusses anesthetic complications. The chapters on hypotension from regional analgesia and pulmonary aspiration are excellent. The chapter on obstetric anesthesia and lawsuits emphasizes the appropriate practice precautions but applies to anesthetic practice in general and contains little that is specifically related to obstetric anesthesia. The last section discusses the evaluation and treatment of the fetus and neonate, including an informative chapter on retrorenal fibroplasia. The knowledge gained of the meaning of such terms as variable and late decelerations (descriptions of fetal heart rates) has improved communication with the obstetricians.

We highly recommend this book to all who are interested in perinatal medicine, from the viewpoint of the anesthesiologist, the obstetrician, or the neonatologist.

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**Respiratory Function of the Lung and Its Control.** By F. S. GRODINS AND S. M. YAMASHIRO. New York, Macmillan, 1979. Price: \$13.50 (cloth), \$9.95 (paper). Pages: 148.

In this book, the authors have taken a systems-analysis approach to examine the respiratory functions of the lung. It contains a very concise, easily readable, brief (141 pages) account of the physical principles involved in pulmonary physiology. As such, it provides a useful but simplified overview of pulmonary physiology for those involved in various aspects of medicine. It is not a substitute for more detailed descriptions of pulmonary physiology contained in larger, conventional textbooks of the subject. For those involved in patient care or pulmonary research, it is a streamlined presentation of physiology and a worthwhile adjunct to other reading in the field.

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