

# BOOK REVIEWS

*Burnell R. Brown, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., Editor*

**Care of the Trauma Patient.** BY G. THOMAS SHIRES. New York, McGraw-Hill Co., Inc., 1980. Pages: 642. Price: \$34.95

In the preface to his book, Dr. Tom Shires emphasizes the magnitude of the problem of trauma in the United States. Mortality from injuries is increasing, while more than 10 million Americans are seriously disabled each year as a result of accidents.

Anesthesiologists recognize the special challenge of the trauma patient; their care requires precise judgement, assessment and intervention to support vital signs and prevent further injury. Therefore, a new and important book is welcome. The second edition, however, is not entirely new; several chapters are virtually identical to the 1966 text. The format has been improved, and the type, figures and photos are legible, clean and clear.

The anesthesiologist will be particularly interested in the first section, which deals with general principles of trauma. The management of shock, resuscitation and anesthesiology are effectively covered. But it is difficult to understand why the editor would include a chapter on metabolic response to trauma which is essentially unchanged from one written 15 years ago. This area has undergone great development; new work and insights into substrate utilization and energy expenditure have been published.

Drs. Giesecke and Jenkins have updated their chapter on anesthesia considerations. It is carefully written and clearly presented; their opinions and positions are forcefully defended and documented.

The chapter on initial care of the injured patient is identical to the one in the 1966 book. It is inconceivable that there are no new recommendations in approach or procedure for the initial care of the trauma patient.

The chapter concerning ventilatory management provides an excellent review, but anesthesiologists will likely be disappointed in the sections devoted to monitoring and post-injury, acute pulmonary failure. This material is presented without offering any new or special understanding, and with only superficial coverage.

The information and exposition in the chapter on burns are not distinguished. The anesthesiologist will be disappointed with the little attention given to anesthesia and airway management of the burned patient. Virtually no information is provided for chemical or electrical burns, and none for cold injury.

The essential problem with Dr. Shires' book is that in attempting to be simple and straightforward, the material is too often simplistic and superficial. It is not clear for whom the book is written. All anthologies present advantages and disadvantages. They should offer expert opinion and analysis based on the most recent studies and observations. Measured to this standard, this book is uneven.

Specialists will likely not be satisfied with the lack of depth present in their own areas, while generalists, including many anesthesiologists interested in traumatology, will find insufficient new in-

formation, particularly in the basic scientific aspects of trauma given in this second edition.

ALLEN HYMAN, M.D.  
*Department of Anesthesiology  
College of Physicians and Surgeons  
of Columbia University  
New York, New York 10032*

**Obstetric Analgesia and Anesthesia.** EDITED BY G. F. MARX AND G. M. BASSELL. Amsterdam, Oxford, New York, Excerpta Medica, 1980. Pages: 415. Price \$75.00.

Drs. Marx and Bassell have given us a reasonable obstetric anesthesia text. It is an international effort with individual chapter authors from Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States. The book attempts to be an overview of the field and to present newer information. The authors have directed the monograph at the obstetric team with emphasis on the anesthesia resident, registrar or fellow. The book assumes that the reader already has a sufficient amount of basic anesthesia knowledge. This would make reading difficult, but certainly not impossible, for the reader outside the field of anesthesia.

The book consists of fourteen chapters presented in a logical format. The sections are well written, referenced, and easy to read. Especially enjoyable was the chapter by Morishima, Pederson, Finster (Effects of Pain on Mother, Labor, and Fetus). The text does formulate the philosophies and preferences of the individual authors, but their biases are well documented and logically presented. Several areas lack the indepth coverage that the topics deserve, *i.e.*, aspiration pneumonitis. The use of tables, graphs, and illustrations were adequate with some chapters better than others. A glossary of U. S. generic, British generic, and commercial drug names is included, which in a multinational authored text can be helpful for the new resident or the reader unfamiliar with the various drug names. Finally, the index is comprehensive and easy to use.

In conclusion, this is a good textbook that in general covers the authors stated objectives. There is a wealth of information in both basic physiology and clinical obstetric anesthesia. The only drawback for the resident or fellow is the price (\$75.00).

JOHN H. FINLEY, M.D.  
*Assistant Professor  
University of Arizona  
Health Sciences Center  
Tucson, Arizona 85724*