

BOOK REVIEWS

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Anyone Can Intubate: A Practical, Step-by-step Guide for Health Professionals. BY C. F. WHITTEN. San Diego, Medical Arts Press, 1989. Pages: 150. Price: \$14.95.

In the introduction to this how-to monograph, the author writes, "Most texts discuss intubation with the expert in mind . . . They lack detailed instruction . . . Today's increasing emphasis on teaching large numbers of students the technique during short training sessions requires a different type of textbook. My book is designed to fill that need." Nonanesthesiologist physicians, medical and nursing students, paramedics, and respiratory therapists are the health professionals for whom the text is intended.

The first six of the book's eleven chapters—Anatomy, Preintubation Evaluation, Equipment, Oral Intubation in the Adult, Common Errors, and Tests for Tube Placement—prepare the reader for most routine intubations. Specialized sections on pediatric, difficult, and nasal intubation precede the concluding chapters on mask airway management and complications of tracheal intubation.

While it is uncertain that tracheal intubation can be learned in short training sessions, this book takes several steps toward clarification of the intubation process and facilitation of its learning. The component steps of tracheal intubation are identified in the manner of task analysis and presented to the reader as a step-by-step sequence including detailed instruction for the action of each of the laryngoscopist's hands. Line diagrams are plentiful. The limitations of mannequin simulation are acknowledged and intubation technique in the human is contrasted to that required in the mannequin. Most importantly, the author repeatedly emphasizes that efforts to ventilate and oxygenate take priority and should precede intubation. An excellent discussion of unilateral breath sounds observed following intubation is found in chapter six.

While these features make valuable educational inroads, they may not extend far enough, in the opinion of this reviewer, to accomplish the author's objective of accelerating learning for the neophyte. The task analysis of the intubation process may be incomplete. For example, the steps of laryngoscope insertion into the mouth, leftward sweep of the tongue, and visualization of the epiglottis are blended into one vague maneuver. The two-dimensional, black-and-white line diagrams, although abundant, inadequately portray the images the neophyte will encounter during his or her first clinical attempts. Yesterday's simple line diagrams can be replaced today by color still or video photography of human anatomy and intubation. The additional expense would likely reap learning dividends. Also, the author's emphasis on oxygenation prior to intubation might be more credible if the chapter on mask airway management preceded, rather than followed, the sections on intubation.

Some material included in the text, *e.g.*, tricks for difficult intubations, positive pressure ventilation *via* a nasopharyngeal airway, and needle cricothyrotomy, may be inappropriately advanced for the intended audience of this guidebook. On the other hand, some sections are oversimplified, *e.g.*, rote guidelines for proper depth of tube insertion; or superficial and unsupported, *e.g.*, "When I encounter a history of surgery, trauma, tumor, radiation, or infection of the airway I reach for a straight, rather than a curved, blade. . . ." This sentence also illustrates the informal first person singular writing occasionally encountered in the text. The validity of statements in the text regarding the relative size of the infant's FRC, reasons for use of uncuffed tracheal tubes in children under 9 years of age, and the capacity to ventilate *via* an intravenous needle cricothyrotomy using a bag-valve ventilating device are debatable.

The educational value of this book may be enhanced in future editions by objective extramural editorial review and increased use of

descriptive flow diagrams outlining the intubation sequence, color photographs of the laryngoscopist's visual images arranged in a step-by-step sequence, and tables (*e.g.*, indications for intubation; causes, physical characteristics, and management strategies of difficult intubations) to facilitate the readers' learning.

While this paperbacked, spiral-bound monograph is priced right for the young health care provider, it may be best suited to the young medical educator. Individuals charged with the task of teaching airway management will benefit from reading the author's step-by-step approach to teaching the complex psychomotor skill of laryngoscopy and may apply many principles found in the text in their own airway instruction. The author is to be credited for this important effort to provide young health professionals a thoughtful approach to learning (and teaching) this often difficult but lifesaving skill.

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Synopsis of Critical Care, Third Edition. EDITED BY WILLIAM J. SIBBALD. Baltimore, Wilkins and Wilkins, 1988. Pages: 334. Price: \$29.95.

The scope of the field of Intensive Care Medicine is at once broad and restrictive. Virtually all medical specialists admit an occasional patient to the Intensive Care Unit, so one could argue that an Intensivist should be familiar with nearly every aspect of medicine. On the other hand, because a relatively narrow list of organ system dysfunctions results in transfer to the Intensive Care Unit, perhaps all that is really necessary is a limited knowledge of supportive care for those organ systems. In light of the controversial scope of Intensive Care, it is not surprising that textbooks of Critical Care tend to reflect one of two extremes: voluminous and comprehensive or brief and narrowly focused. Few texts provide a clinically useful overview of the entire field. In preparing the third edition of his introductory text, Dr. Sibbald has done an admirable job of providing a broad-based, clinically useful text of manageable size and modest price.

The soft-bound text contains 40 chapters and two appendices, primarily authored by the editor's colleagues at the University of Western Ontario. The text is truly multidisciplinary, with the majority of chapters written by surgeons, internists, or anesthesiologists. The book is organized into six major sections: Cardiovascular; Pulmonary; Renal, Fluids and Electrolytes; Neurological Sciences; Trauma; and Specific Syndromes. Each section contains individual topics of sufficient number to provide a summary of a subject area as it pertains to the broader field of Critical Care.

On average, the text reads quickly and contains few assertions that are incorrect or controversial. Of course, the text does display some unevenness, one of the inescapable characteristics of a multi-authored volume. The variability is most evident in the bibliographies, some of which demonstrate careful, critical selection while others contain outdated material. However, the vast majority of the reviews themselves are well-written and consistently edited. The figures and tables that have been included are useful, although they are unevenly distributed throughout the book.

The chapters on cardiac arrhythmias, shock, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the Cardiovascular section are particularly well-done

overviews. Although the Pulmonary section contains two excellent summaries of pulmonary edema and pulmonary embolism, the chapter on ventilator management is dated and superficial. In the section entitled Renal, Fluids and Electrolytes, the chapters on acute renal failure and drug dosage in renal failure provide well-crafted introductions to common ICU problems. The Neurological Sciences section contains a concise, clinically pertinent discussion of traumatic brain injury and an authoritative but tedious review of the assessment of acute disturbances of consciousness. The nine chapters that constitute the section on Trauma provide a broad review of trauma. Those chapters are particularly well integrated in that each provides a similar amount of depth and detail. One especially useful summary of the common, practical problem of transport of critically ill patients completes that section. The final section, Specific Syndromes, could reasonably be entitled Miscellaneous Considerations, since it includes such diverse topics as "Acute poisonings" and "Emotional concerns and ethical issues in critical care." The two appendices contain a substantial amount of infor-

mation regarding "Monitoring techniques and normal values" and "Drugs used in the treatment of the critically ill."

In summary, this textbook is a brief but comprehensive introductory text that should be of particular value to medical students and house officers who are participating in an introductory Intensive Care Unit rotation. It should also be attractive as a concise review and reference text for Intensive Care fellows. Practicing intensivists will find it useful for preparation of basic teaching material and as a source for information regarding less frequently encountered topics.

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