

BOOK REVIEWS

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Clinical Neurosurgery: Volume 35. Proceedings of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, 1987. BY PETER MCL. BLACK, M.D., PH.D. Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins.

This volume records the proceedings of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons meeting in October 1987, and is dedicated to the honor of Dr. Thomas W. Langfitt. For many years Dr. Langfitt was Professor and Chairman of Neurosurgery at the University of Pennsylvania and made many significant contributions to neuroanesthesia. He was a major supporter of the founding of the Society of Neurological Anesthesia and Neurologic Supportive Care. At present, Dr. Langfitt is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Glenmeade Trust Company.

This volume offers a summation of the state of the art in neurosurgery as of 1987. Dr. Langfitt gives three presentations as honored guest speaker. The first of these is an expansion on the decision matrix of Siegler as one element in the process of deciding when care should be stripped of technologic complexity and focused upon terminal support for patient and family. The second presentation is a fascinating overview of the present position of problem solving in the neurosciences, and is interesting reading for those who may wish to obtain research funding. Finally, Dr. Langfitt reviews the many complex issues that may or may not have compromised the randomized clinical trial of superficial temporal artery to middle cerebral artery anastomoses.

The remainder of the book is divided into segments dealing with elements of the Art and Science of Neurosurgical Care. A series of presentations on Intensive Care indicate that the neurosurgeons feel capable of dealing with that area without outside expert help, certified or not. The presentation on management of brain tumors also describes technologic advances in operating room equipment. The neurosurgical approach to pain management is detailed in seven chapters. Particularly interesting is a chapter on the Use and Abuse of Drug Pumps in Cancer Pain. A final section presents arguments in controversial areas, including alternatives to surgical treatment of herniated lumbar disks, management of asymptomatic carotid stenosis, and management of incidental intracranial aneurysms.

All in all, the book is an excellent review of current neurosurgical practice. It provides strong testimony to the neurosurgeons' exceptional ability to carry out critical self examination. Certainly the book is informative and entertaining reading for anyone especially interested in neurosurgical anesthesia.

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Introduction to Critical Care. BY J. M. CIVETTA, R. W. TAYLOR, R. R. KIRBY. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1989. Pages: 311. Price \$29.95.

This introductory book on critical care is a valuable adjunct to the larger texts on critical care. It contains 17 chapters that are excerpted from the textbook *Critical Care* recently published by the same authors. This book brings together thoughts of physicians, nurses, psychotherapists, ethicists, judges, and lawyers on intensive care unit issues regarding patient care and role of health care personnel with the goal of decreasing the stress so commonly associated with intensive care unit practice. It gives an excellent overview of the organization of the critical care unit and touches on key topics unique to critical care. The sections on "Important Legal Decisions in Critical Care" and "Pre-

diction and Definition of Outcome in a Cost-Sensitive Era" are particularly strong.

The soft-bound text consists of two parts: "Concepts" which contains nine chapters, and "People" which contains eight chapters. "Concepts" addresses the historical development of intensive care units, criteria for admission, ethical, legal and cost considerations, and medical determinants of outcome. "People" addresses the importance of interrelationships of the intensive care unit team, and carefully describes the role of each member of the team, especially the intensive care unit fellow and nurse. It also addresses the importance of interactions with the patient and family. Excellent up-to-date bibliographies accompany each chapter.

In the first part, "Concepts," the initial chapters set out goals for intensive care including selection of appropriate patients who will benefit from treatment in the intensive care unit, and the multiple purposes of the intensive care unit including intensive monitoring and observation, extensive nursing care and/or extensive physician care. Clinical decision making is discussed. The conflict in the intensive care unit between the ethical principles of "preserving life" and "alleviating suffering" is discussed and resolved *via* Cynthia Cohen's "potential for salvageability" as a necessary condition for admission. Although this condition will not apply to all patients, it does give physicians a framework on which to base their decisions.

Chapter 6, "Important Legal Decisions in Critical Care," is comprehensive, practical, and readable, summarizing landmark legal decisions including those of Quinlan and Saikewicz, and the President's Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical and Behavioral Research. It also defines the advance directives for patient care that are available: *e.g.*, living wills and durable powers of attorney. Chapter 8 continues with common-sense guidelines for avoiding legal suit.

Chapter 9, "Prediction and Definition of Outcome in a Cost-Sensitive Era," is particularly useful in defining several of the commonly used severity of illness scoring systems: Therapeutic Intervention Scoring System (TISS) which some of these authors developed, Acute Physiology and Chronic Health Evaluation (APACHE II), and the Multiple Logistic Regression (MLR) model. The authors are also careful to point out some of the limitations of these methods and difficulties in validating them. This chapter is an excellent reference source, with 20 tables.

The second part, "People," describes the ICU team members: medical director, ICU fellow, nurse, and ancillary personnel. It stresses the importance of communicated expectations of the specific role of each member. Chapter 13 focuses on the psychological dynamics of the interactions between health care personnel, patient, and family. It appropriately stresses the presence of denial, fear, and lack of control experienced by many patients and their families, and how physicians can effectively deal with these powerful feelings.

Chapter 16 on "Preventive Care: Poorly Appreciated and Undervalued" had clinical information on several important topics including management of wounds, decubitus ulcers, compartment syndromes, and complications associated with ICU devices.

In summary, this introductory book is a superb excerpt of the full textbook on critical care that these authors have written. It covers essential topics in critical care and will be particularly useful to someone who does not wish to purchase the full text. Although it is targeted principally at ICU fellows and nurses, it is also a handy reference source for physicians who have limited exposure to critical care, yet want a quick, up-to-date review of the issues. It teaches medical and organizational skills needed to direct an intensive care unit. It does not address medical therapeutics; rather, it stresses the multidisciplinary approach