

## Manual of anaesthesia

Reviewed by Barry Lim

**Manual of anaesthesia.** C Y Lee, McGraw-Hill Professional, 2005 (912 pp, \$29.95). ISBN 0071248072.

The title of this book may hint at its origin, which I presume was a series of guides for new trainees in anaesthesia. This would probably also be the target audience for this tome.

The layout of the book is generally excellent. The author uses some unfamiliar abbreviations, probably reflecting regional differences, but it has a good glossary section before the first chapter to clarify. Some of the practices also perhaps reflected local practice. For example, awake craniotomies were described with no specific blocks of scalp nerves, and it would have been nice if these were at least mentioned.

There was a tendency towards the didactic, rather than expanding on the theoretical background behind the actions. But then, this is beyond the scope of the author's intention. Many of the instructions were in the form of lists. However, some of these could be repetitive, such as monitoring require-

ments during anaesthesia and surgery. The prose was also liberally sprinkled with admonishments, in case one has thoughts of deviating. It was encouraging to see that there was much emphasis on preoperative and as well postoperative visits.

This is generally a useful book and, more importantly, a sound one with solid contents. It could be improved with more diagrams, such as diagrams to accompany the descriptions of various blocks. For example, there were none associated with the blocks for ophthalmic surgery. Either a pocket-sized version or "companion" or perhaps, in keeping with the times, a version for PDA (personal digital assistant), would be very useful to the junior trainee, while the larger version can be used as a reference.

**Barry Lim**, Clinical Lecturer, School of Medicine and Pharmacology, and Staff Anaesthetist, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Perth, WA.

*Correspondence:* barrylim@email.com □

## Pocket guide to perioperative and critical care echocardiography

Reviewed by Mark J Lennon

**Pocket guide to perioperative and critical care echocardiography.** Colin Royse, Garry Donnan, Alistair Royse, McGraw-Hill Australia, 2006 (218 pp, \$44.95). ISBN 0074716115

In recent years, we have seen the rapid emergence of point-of-care ultrasound devices in hospital operating theatres, intensive care units and emergency departments. Although these devices are yet to find a definitive place in acute care medicine, point-of-care ultrasonography seems here to stay. Echocardiography can greatly assist in the assessment of haemodynamic disturbances in the acute care setting. This technique, once the exclusive realm of cardiologists, is now available to any number of acute care practitioners. This book is ideal for the emerging enthusiast and is also a valuable guide for the more experienced practitioner. Obviously, it is not a definitive text and, as such, "it does what it says on the packet". However, it is a useful introduction to echocardiography and is enough to get started on the road to competence.

The book has 15 chapters. The first four deal with basic aspects of physics, artefacts and anatomy and provide an adequate knowledge base to proceed with image acquisition. The next eight chapters deal with cardiac imaging in a problem-based manner. This is a sensible approach to echocardiography for non-accredited practitioners.

Two chapters deal with ultrasound-guided nerve blocks and vessel cannulation. In the future, trainees will probably not be comfortable placing central lines or performing nerve blocks without ultrasound guidance, and it will become a mandatory part of their training. The logistics of accurate needle guidance techniques can be difficult to master and are best taught at the bedside, but these chapters provide useful preliminary information. The final chapter, "Education and training", adds little other than to advertise a postgraduate diploma course in perioperative echocardiography.

An additional feature is the bonus mini-CD with good quality ultrasound clips and graphics. Don't try to load this into your laptop if it is a "slot loader" ... you might not get it back! It is suitable only for computers with a CD-tray loader. A useful addition to the book would have been an appendix listing the relevant 2-D dimensions and doppler velocities for quick reference. At \$44.95, the book is well worth the investment and could quite happily live in the top drawer of any ultrasound machine.

**Mark J Lennon**, Intensive Care Specialist, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Perth, WA.

*Correspondence:* mark.lennon@health.wa.gov.au □