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# Book Reviews

## Critiques de livres

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**CANCER SURGERY.** James C. Harvey and Edward J. Beattie. 599 pp. Illust. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia; W.B. Saunders Canada, Toronto. 1996. \$167. ISBN 0-7216-5173-9

It is surprising that in an era of multidisciplinary combined planning and treatment of oncologic disease, a textbook of cancer surgery would be of value. In the 1990s, most cancer surgeons would consider themselves to be surgical oncologists, so even the title *Cancer Surgery* has a historic ring to it. Nevertheless, we must recognize that although cancer treatment requires accurate diagnosis and staging and aggressive surgical management, frequently the diagnosis is made only at operation, so much cancer surgery is performed by non-oncologic surgeons. It is to that group that this book is directed. The authors' intent is to cover cancers of the various anatomic regions of the body as an up-to-date reference, primarily for generalists and for surgeons who are cancer specialists but wish to refresh themselves about a specific area preoperatively. They have clearly met their primary objective: this is an excellent source book for general surgeons, general surgical residents or subspecialty residents. The level of detail in this text, however, is inadequate for the practising surgical oncologist.

Despite this limitation, the book is an outstanding review of oncologic surgery and adjuvant therapy for common and rare tumours of virtually every anatomic site in the body. A few chapters, such as that on head and neck cancer and on soft-tissue sarcomas of the extremities, reflect the idiosyncratic views of the chapter authors rather than the overall level of knowledge in the area. However, most of the other chapters are well balanced and provide a generally accepted standard

approach to management, treatment options and adjuvant therapy as well as excellent, up-to-date references on outcomes of various types of treatment. The writing style varies somewhat with the chapter; however, this is not unusual in a multiauthored textbook. The editors have done an excellent job in ensuring that there is consistency throughout.

The text is well illustrated with numerous radiographs, anatomic drawings and "atlas style" drawings of specific complex techniques. There are summary tables emphasizing treatment outcomes in randomized trials in virtually every chapter. The references are inclusive, and the index is excellent.

Although this text might be somewhat limited in its appeal to specialist surgical oncologists, it is an outstanding reference for general surgeons and surgical residents. It should find a welcome and well-deserved place in the reference library of every division of general surgery.

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**OPERATIVE LAPAROSCOPY AND THORACOSCOPY.** Edited by Bruce V. MacFadyen, Jr. and Jeffrey L. Ponsky. 959 pp. Illust. Lippincott-Raven, Philadelphia. 1996. US\$235. ISBN 0-7817-0279-8

The days of explosive growth in the field of laparoscopy are over. Surgeons are taking a step back to consolidate the procedures they have learned, focus on safety and evaluate whether these procedures bring real benefit to their patients and the health care sys-

tem at large. This book of current practice of operative laparoscopy and thoracoscopy arrives in time to give the laparoscopic surgeon a comprehensive operative manual of all the established and developing laparoscopic and thoracoscopic procedures and their current status in clinical practice. The format of each chapter is standardized. It starts with a short section on anatomy, followed by preoperative planning and intraoperative management and surgical technique, all illustrated with drawings and colour photographs, then a section on complications and finally a concluding section, emphasizing the advantages and limitations and current status. At the end of each chapter is an enclosed section entitled "surgical pearls," representing the personal experience of the authors.

The book is organized into 12 sections with 53 chapters. The first section contains 9 chapters on general considerations of laparoscopy, including history, anesthesia, training and credentialling, economic considerations, technology, sterilization, video imaging, electro- and laser surgery, and basic techniques and suturing skills. The second section (2 chapters) covers exploratory laparoscopy and its role in the management of acute abdomen. The bulk of the text comprises 8 sections (34 chapters), which are organ specific: the gallbladder — 3 chapters on elective cholecystectomy, acute cholecystitis, and cholecystostomy; bile duct — 5 chapters on transcystic exploration, choledochotomy, cholangiography, transhepatic lithotripsy and choledoscopy; the pancreas, liver and spleen — 5 chapters on cholecystojejunostomy, pancreatic pseudocysts, pancreatoduodenectomy, hepatectomy and splenectomy; vertebral column — 1 chapter on spinal access; retroperitoneum — 3 chapters on nephrec-

tomy, pelvic lymphadenectomy and adrenalectomy; stomach — 6 chapters on gastrectomy, gastroenterostomy, vagotomy, peptic ulcer complications, gastroesophageal reflux surgery and access for enteral feeding; colon and small bowel — 7 chapters on colon resection, anterior resection, endoluminal rectal surgery, ileostomy and colostomy, small-bowel resection and appendectomy; hernia — 4 chapters on intraperitoneal, retroperitoneal and extraperitoneal approaches of inguinal hernia and repair of ventral hernia. These sections are followed by a section on thoracoscopy, which contains 6 chapters on exploratory thoracoscopy, dorsal sympathectomy, lung resection, esophageal surgery, pericardiectomy and cardiomyotomy for achalasia. The final single-chapter section on future technology focuses on future directions in robotics, virtual reality and remote surgery.

The editors claim that this book contains the latest clinical procedures and will aid the beginning as well as the most experienced laparoscopist. The book is written by many of the leading experts and pioneers with extensive experience in this field. The chapters are fairly uniform in quality; and the drawings and colour photographs are generally excellent. As such, this book of operative laparoscopy and thoracoscopy will be a useful addition to the established literature on the subject.

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**REVIEW FOR SURGERY: SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE.** 2nd edition. Edited by Lazar G. Greenfield, Michael W. Mulholland, Keith D. Lillemoe, Keith T. Oldham and Gerald

B. Zelenock. 515 pp. Illust. Lippincott-Raven, Philadelphia. 1997. US\$39.95. ISBN 0-397-51582-0

The *Review for Surgery* is a question and answer-style manual, designed to accompany the second edition of the text *Surgery: Scientific Principles and Practice*. It should be noted, however, that this review book can also stand alone as a source of information and as a study guide. It is designed to be a self-assessment and education tool for surgeons at all levels of training and practice. Both the resident-in-training preparing for qualifying examinations and the established practising surgeon taking recertification board examinations are the intended readers.

The book is divided into 114 topics, dealing with basic issues such as inflammation, wound healing, gene therapy and tumour biology, as well as clinical topics such as gastric neoplasms, thyroid disease, pancreatitis and colon cancer.

The categories cover all areas of general surgery, including pertinent aspects of other specialties (e.g., pediatric, vascular, orthopedic and gynecologic surgery). For each section a selection of multiple-choice questions, their answers and a brief explanation of each response are included. The answers are cross-referenced to the chapter in the main surgical text.

The style is concise yet thorough and covers a broad range of important areas. Its content is factual, accurate and up to date. The presentation is enhanced by the addition of diagrams, graphs and tables, although these are infrequent. Minor problems include the omission of a few topics I would consider important, such as pharmacology, ethics and clinical epidemiology. A helpful addition would be additional references, either accompanying each question or as a list at the end of each section.

For those who prefer it, the text has also been placed on computer, and the diskette is included with the printed textbook on purchase. This allows you to read and answer your questions on screen in a study mode or a test mode. If you prefer interacting with a computer screen instead of a book, this may be a welcome adjunct, although a technical problem with this caused me some minor frustration. It was impossible to enlarge the working window such that the whole question could fit on the screen at any one time. This necessitated frequent movement of the cursor, which became quite irritating.

In summary this is an excellent, comprehensive review program and a helpful tool for the surgeon who wishes to study for examination or update his or her knowledge base.

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**THE STANFORD MANUAL OF CARDIOPULMONARY TRANSPLANTATION.** Edited by Julian A. Smith, Patrick M. McCarthy, George E. Saris, Edward B. Stinson and Bruce A. Reitz. 306 pp. Illust. Futura Publishing Company Inc., Armonk, NY. 1996. US\$65. ISBN 0-87993-637-1

This is the first edition of a multi-authored book from one of the leading centres in thoracic organ transplantation. The editors have achieved their stated goal: to present the surgical and medical management strategies in patients who undergo thoracic organ transplantation in a clear, precise and easily retrievable format. "The target audience is not only physicians and nurses working in a