Book Reviews

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Techniques in Cardiac Surgery, 2nd ed, by Denton A. Cooley, M.D., Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1984, 416 pp, $75.00.

This book, a manual dealing with the operative technique for surgery of the heart and great vessels, is written almost entirely by Dr. Denton A. Cooley, Surgeon-In-Chief of the Texas Heart Institute, Houston—an individual whose personal experience in cardiac surgery is unequaled. The only chapters not written by Dr. Cooley are "Revascularization of the Ischemic Myocardium" by George J. Reul, Jr., M.D., and "Cardiopulmonary Assistance" by O. Howard Frazier, M.D. Both are colleagues of Dr. Cooley at the Texas Heart Institute.

The usefulness of an operative textbook is proportional to its detail, the personal experience of the authors, and the quality of the illustrations. This manual scores high in all three areas. Dr. Cooley's enormous personal experience has enabled him to focus on crucial technical points, to delineate potential intraoperative pitfalls with accuracy, and also to construct a comprehensive text. Consequently, this work is not merely a primer. Even surgeons with extensive experience of their own will find valuable insights. The quality of the illustrations is important, not only for precision in communicating the details of operative techniques to experienced surgeons, but also for making the work useful to surgeons-in-training and non-surgeons who may not completely understand anatomic and operative concepts without clear pictorial representation. The clarity, standard style, and logical progression of the illustrations make these operative procedures understandable even to the inexperienced.

In general, the single-author format is efficient and consistent, and the comparatively small size of the book makes it handy as well as comprehensive. The text concentrates on the operative technique itself; therefore, there is little discussion of the long- and short-term results of operation. This is the single most useful book dealing with the operative aspects of cardiac surgery, and it will be valuable for a spectrum of readers, including cardiologists and cardiac surgeons, either in training or practicing.

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Heart Disease: A Textbook of Cardiovascular Medicine, 2nd ed, edited by Eugene Braunwald, M.D., Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1984, 1,844 pp, $99.00.

Textbooks like *Heart Disease* are a pleasure to receive and review. If well done—and this one is—they are not only useful, concentrated tools for study, but also visual and palpable symbols of the history and tradition and present and future direction of a given discipline. Reading sections of *Heart Disease* either for casual perusal or detailed study is worthwhile because old concepts and factors are reinforced and new ideas are clearly presented.

The format of this book is similar to that of the first edition. There are four large sections:

1. Basic evaluation of patients and review of current diagnostic technologies,
2. Discussion of abnormal physiology,
3. Discussion of specific disease states, and finally,
4. Review of the heart and its relationship to noncardiac disease states.

For the most part, the writing styles are clear and direct. The tables and illustrations are detailed and generally well-reproduced. The references are extensive. The index seems excellent, which is extremely important for a book of this type. New and expanded sections dealing with electrophysiologic testing and the advanced treatment of complex cardiac arrhythmias have been included, as have reviews of magnetic resonance and radionuclide imaging. Digital subtraction angiography is discussed, but not in any great detail.

This is not a book for the medical student or junior physician. But, for an active student of cardiovascular disease who is at any age or level of training, *Heart Disease* can be a very valuable tool and should have a place on that individual's bookshelf.

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Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease: Practical Management of the Risk Factors, edited by Norman M. Kaplan, M.D., and Jeremiah Stamler, M.D., Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1983, 232 pp, $35.00.

Cardiovascular disease has reigned notoriously

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throughout the 20th century as the leading cause of death in the United States and many other industrialized countries. The literature has given contrasting views for identifying the various risk factors associated with coronary heart disease, their impact on morbidity and mortality, and their management. This book does an excellent job of providing a succinct but comprehensive discussion of evidence which supports or does not support the role of "risk" factors in the development of premature cardiovascular disease. The Framingham study, one of the largest comprehensive evaluations of coronary heart disease, serves as a touchstone and ready reference for discussion throughout the text. Some of the principal authors of this book, who were primary investigators in the Framingham study, present objective data and ample references which enable the reader to individualize decision-making and analyze controversial issues.

The first chapter, written by William B. Kannel, provides the reader with a good overview of the various risk factors and issues discussed in the later chapters. These other sections are devoted to exploring each cardiovascular risk factor independently and analyzing the role of the physician in educating the patient and the public.

Chapter two provides a good discussion of atherosclerosis and its prevention in the pediatric age group. The necessity for initiating primary and secondary preventative measures when possible is highlighted. The salient features of therapy and the need for individualization of therapy are stressed.

Chapter nine, written by Norman M. Kaplan, discusses clinical diabetes and glucose intolerance and their effects on cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. This chapter is short and informative; it introduces the problem of defining diabetes and the lack of a uniform definition in the literature (for example, the definition of diabetes used in the Framingham study is contrasted with that used by the National Diabetes Data Group in 1979).

The final chapter, entitled "The Benefits of Prevention" and written by Jeremiah Stamler and Kiang Liu, discusses the benefits of prevention of cardiovascular disease. It provides the reader with a spectrum of cardiovascular disease in the United States and around the world for the last two decades. In this chapter, the authors illustrate the downward trend of cardiovascular disease mortality and offer an explanation that implicates risk-factor modification as being primarily responsible. Controversy still exists over whether risk-factor modification can be influential in primary and secondary prevention of coronary heart disease. The authors' conclusion seems misleading since they neglect to consider the impact of coronary artery bypass surgery on select groups of patients during this period.

Overall, this monograph is well-organized and is particularly valuable because it offers ample references. There is some overlap in the data presented in a few chapters, which gives the reader the impression that the authors might not have fully communicated with each other when writing their chapters. The 50 illustrations in the monograph help elucidate the accompanying data. A glossary provided in the beginning of the monograph introduces and defines statistical terminology used in the text. Two appendixes provide "Sources of Literature for Patient Education" and "Useful References for the Public."

I recommend this text for cardiologists, internists, physicians, and medical students interested in the subject matter. *Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease* provides concise and pertinent information, primary and secondary prevention techniques, and an extensive bibliography. In addition to the few aforementioned shortcomings, one major criticism is that the book lacks depth both in its discussion of diabetes and in the secondary prevention of coronary heart disease in the pediatric age group. Even though the controversial nature of the subject matter makes it difficult to write a text devoid of dogmatic commentaries, the authors do succeed in expressing their views while circumventing this problem.

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Books Received

Cardiovascular Therapy, edited by Donald G. Vidt, M.D., Philadelphia, F. A. Davis, 1981, 207 pp, $35.00.

Specialty Board Review—General Surgery, edited by S. L. Kountz, M.D., New York, Arco Publishing, 1982, 288 pp, $10.00 (multiple-choice question-and-answer review).

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