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Book notices

High Frequency Ventilation in Intensive Care and During Surgery. Ed Graziano C Carlon and William S Howland. (Pp 304; \$59.75.) Marcell Dekker, 1985.

A comprehensive and up to date review of the rapidly developing field of high frequency ventilation (HFV) is much needed. This volume of *Lung Biology in Health and Disease* (No 26) reflects developments in both Europe and the United States, with a contribution from Australia. The references are prolific and current, some less than a year old. The editors have attempted to delineate the three methods of HFV—high frequency pressure ventilation (HFPPV), high frequency jet ventilation (HFJV), and high frequency oscillation (HFO)—by allocating chapters according to appropriate authors. This is a mistake and has resulted in extensive and annoying repetition. Not only do the introductory chapters describe the uses of HFV, but there are separate chapters on application of HFPPV, HFJV, and HFO. As the proposed uses of each differ so little one comprehensive chapter would have sufficed. Similar criticism can be directed at the sections on the physiological effects of each technique. The first two chapters provide an introduction that pre-empt many of the conclusions of later chapters. One wonders whether or not it is deliberate that all the paragraphs on page 2 begin with the words "high frequency" Unfortunately in chapter 3 new terms and abbreviations are introduced with inadequate explanation. This chapter is a collage of complicated research work and theory from two groups of authors, with a concluding paragraph by the editors. Its attempt to provide an explanation of the mechanisms of gas transport in HFV left me floundering and I was relieved by the conclusion that "No definitive solution . . . is offered." As we read there is a continuing sense of déjà vu. By the time I reached page 64 with the third repeat of both the definition of HFV and the characteristics of HFPPV, I was becoming decidedly irritated. While it is important for chapters in such a book to stand on their own it must be doubted whether the editors bothered to read the text. The intrusion of a list of up to eight names with dates does not make for easy reading. While the book will be a useful reference work for those concerned with the clinical and research applications of HFV, it cannot be recommended for widespread purchase. It might be worth

borrowing from the library to test the assertion by one contributor that "In the minds of some, high frequency ventilation is still a technique in search of an application."—RBH

YAG Laser Bronchoscopy (Surgical Science Series, vol 5). JF Dumon. (Pp 116; £31.25.) Praeger Publishers, 1985.

JF Dumon is well known as one of the most experienced exponents of bronchoscopic treatment with the neodymium YAG laser. This short book describes his own technique with a modified Wolf rigid bronchoscope and a closed circuit system for general anaesthesia with the patient breathing spontaneously. Extra channels have been fitted to the bronchoscope for the laser and suction tube. The book is well illustrated with line drawings and some black and white endoscopic photographs. It contains some useful practical points. The importance of haemorrhage and hypoxaemia as complications is well recognised and manoeuvres for controlling them are well described. A preliminary chapter emphasises the importance of the anatomical relationships of the trachea, major bronchi, and major blood vessels. The anaesthetic technique is somewhat briefly described. The book is well referenced, apart from omission of British publications. While most workers using a laser might agree with the author's recommendation to use a rigid bronchoscope and general anaesthesia, the book gives a narrow view of the subject. Alternative techniques such as anaesthesia by jet ventilation and use of the fiberoptic bronchoscope are dismissed in a sentence or two without discussion to support these views. Further chapters discuss the indications for laser treatment in both tumours and benign lesions but the author's clinical series, although large, are somewhat anecdotally described. There is considerable repetition, particularly in a long concluding chapter which adds little to the preceding chapters. In conclusion, this book is likely to interest only those with a serious intention of using a laser themselves. The clinician in search of a balanced and comprehensive account of lasers in pulmonary medicine and surgery will not achieve much from reading this book alone.—MRH