

on issues relating to organ transplantation is presented as a series of essays organized into four sections.

The book uses the story of Jessica Santillan as an introduction to the types of attitudes, perspectives, and ethical dilemmas that organ transplantation can fuel. Santillan was an undocumented immigrant teenager from Mexico who received a heart lung transplant at Duke University Medical Center in 2003. Unfortunately, the organs used were not the correct blood type. To save the girl's life, a second transplant was performed days later with a proper set of organs. Sadly, Jessica's already exhausted body was beyond repair and she died soon after.

Whose fault was it that such a grave medical mistake was made? How could a second set of organs be obtained so quickly? Is it right to let an undocumented immigrant receive an organ transplant at all? Questions such as these are explored further in essays whose topics range from the racial tensions surrounding organ transplantation in the 1960s and '70s to a detailed overview of the organ allocation process of today, from the realities of the black market of organ trade to market-oriented medical ethics, from the details of harvesting organs to all that can go wrong during and after transplantation.

The essays do a great job of formulating their overall conclusions in the context of Jessica's bungled transplant, a familiar home base to anyone reading this book. The topics discussed in *A Death Retold* are greatly interdisciplinary, and, not surprisingly, the authors include anthropologists, medical ethicists, historians, transplant surgeons, and health lawyers. They have successfully connected economics, sociology, history, ethics, and medicine in the framework of organ transplantation. If you are interested in any aspect of organ transplantation, this is a fascinating book to read.

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***Handbook of Neurosurgery.* Mark S. Greenberg. New York: Thieme Medical Publishers; 2006. 1013 pp. \$71.95 Paperback. ISBN: 9781588904577.**

Never have I found a single resource more useful during my rotation through neurosurgery than Mark Greenberg's *Handbook of Neurosurgery*. It also fits conveniently in the pocket of a standard white coat.

As the title indicates, Greenberg's handbook is exactly that, an essential resource intended for use on the wards while caring for neurosurgical patients. Now in its sixth iteration, it is a tool written by neurosurgeons for neurosurgeons. The structure of the book suits its purpose: 28 chapters covering simple subjects like basic neuroanatomy to how to properly work up a complicated patient suffering from a subarachnoid bleed. It tackles all the most important topics facing today's neurosurgeons with extensive cross-referencing between chapters, complete with thorough annotations to countless peer-reviewed journals at the end of the chapters. One of the book's strengths is its reliance on high quality evidence-based studies for its recommendations. Greenberg does a surprising job of building neurosurgical problems from the ground up, going into sufficient detail regarding the etiology and pathophysiology, which the medical student appreciates, but devoting the majority of its text to diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, and outcomes that the clinician appreciates.

The intended audience is clearly those in their post-graduate medical training in neurosurgery, but the book also was utilized by many neurology residents, particularly in caring for critically ill neurological patients in the intensive care unit. Many of the chapters use graphs and charts for easy to access information in a standardized format that carries throughout the book. This assists the learning process by formatting specific types of information in a common visual presentation that lends itself to better recall. For example, most of the drugs in the book are presented in a standard note card format. While sometimes it suffers from an over-reliance on the brief and simplistic

outline format, it does accommodate subject matter that requires more detailed explanations. Specifically, the book does a nice job of bridging the latest recommendations and classification schema with clinical practice, explaining how and why guidelines can be applied.

Even though it is a very strong overall reference, it is notably limited in size and scope in some neurological areas, specifically neuro-ophthalmology and neurotology. However, the book does accomplish the goal of providing a concise resource for innumerable pertinent facts and figures to the modern neurosurgical practice. From a medical student's standpoint, the book elevated my un-

derstanding of the neurosurgical patient so I could meaningfully participate and understand the discussion taking place between my resident and attending. I would not be able to comment on its usefulness and relevance at the senior resident or attending level. While I found it a wealth of information that could be overwhelming times, they might find it lacking in certain key areas. With that in mind, all of the residents I have spoken with found it an "essential" component of their training and a "must have" tool, particularly at the early stages of their career.

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