This book is probably the best of the recently produced multi-author tomes on trauma from the USA. It is easy to read and perhaps its major fault is that some detail has had to be sacrificed in order to achieve the comprehensive nature of the contents. The traumatologist will find that there is something to learn from nearly all its chapters except for the section on pre-hospital care which regrettably is very disappointing.

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1988 Yearbook of Emergency Medicine

Edited by DAVID K. WAGNER

Yearbook Medical Publishers Inc., Chicago, 1988. 334pp. £35.50.

The Yearbook of Emergency Medicine consists of 325 titled abstracts, each with its original journal reference, taken from 79 journals, ranging from the *Journal of Trauma* to *Acta Paediatrica Scandinavica*. Each abstract is immediately followed by a guest editorial comment, many of equal proportion and import to the accompanying abstract. The material is collected into sections, for example Acute Systems Pathophysiology, Trauma Emergencies etc. and includes a broad range of informative articles of relevance to the specialty of accident and emergency medicine.

A working knowledge of accident and emergency medicine is a definite benefit in getting the most from this work. Of its very nature, it is not a teaching text book. However, the reader with some background knowledge will find this book complementary, providing up-to-date information on previous work, some new tricks and ideas and practical information on rarer topics. A large percentage of the entries are comprehensive in the provision of data and conclusions. A number, though small, are uninformative and of doubtful relevance. I found the editorial comments always at least as useful and on many occasions, more so, than the relevant abstract; they were far more than simply textual thumbs-up or -down comments. Many of them included references to other relevant works. If an article was poor, the editorial comment would usefully prevent the reader from a time-wasting search for the original with a comprehensive criticism. This is uncommon, as most of the abstracts were well structured, relevant, informative and stimulating and were followed by solid well-informed editorial comment.

I think this book is a good way of boning up of many aspects of state-of-the-art emergency medicine, and is a useful addition to the accident and emergency specialists' collection.

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