large- and medium-sized arteries, arterioles, capillaries, and finally diseases of the pulmonary circulation. The remaining 18 chapters cover the fundamentals of practicing cardiovascular pathology in a tertiary care setting. To that end, chapters unique to this edition include one on interactions between heart and brain, pathology of heart valve substitution, cardiac transplantation and significantly updated cardiovascular interventions, effects of drugs on the cardiovascular system, and genetic causes of disease affecting the heart and great vessels. Although a solid understanding of pathophysio-
logic mechanisms is implied, the text is well written and under-
standable for a first-time reader of the medical sciences.

The text, as one would expect, is heavily illustrated with updated and newly published color photographs. However, sev-
eral chapters have maintained black and white format, which detracts from many of the gross and microscopic formats. There are many radiographs, echocardiograms, and angiograms to sup-
port the gross and microscopic examples. Line art and tabular for-
mats are used to expand and enumerate discrete data sets and to illustrate pathophysiologic processes not implicit in either gross or microscopic pictures. The index is comprehensive and reflects the detailed nature of the entire book.

This edition of Dr Silver’s original book is a must have for any student of cardiovascular pathology. Drs Gotlieb and Schoen, in conjunction with Dr Silver, have brought together an internation-
ally recognized group of cardiovascular pathology experts who, in outstanding fashion, represent the state of the art in card-
diovascular pathology. Significant changes include a single vol-
ume format, color photography, imaging studies, and new chapters reflecting changes in cardiovascular interventions related to treatment of cardiovascular disease.

William C. Quist, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor of Pathology
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Boston, Mass

Evidence-based manual of coronary care management

Mark Cannaughton; London; 2001; Churchill Livingston; 215 pages; $35.00.

The “manual” genre of medical books can in many ways be considered an art form. The gold standard of this art form is, for most practicing physicians, The Washington Manual. It is concise, clinical in its perspective, and practical in its approach, while at the same time, medical evidence is seamlessly referenced throughout the text. In the Evidence-Based Manual of Coronary Care Management, the author tries the opposite approach whereby the medical evidence is entirely extracted from the text and is placed on the opposing page. This approach and structure make it unique and may make it more appealing to some readers. For the most part, the text provides a basic review of current management of acute myocardial infarction and unstable angina. The unique structure of the text seems to potentially serve the reader well here. Because of the large number of studies that have been performed on these common cardiomyopathy problems, compre-
hensive discussions of each aspect of therapy can be cumbersome at the wrong time. Readers who need a quick reference resource should find that the clinical recommendations are fairly straight-
forward and easy to follow, although details on dosing and admin-
istration are sometimes difficult to find.

Sections on treatment are highlighted and numbered with a three-star rating system for weight of evidence supporting the recommenda-
tion. However, for those readers who are interested in more information about the various studies behind the evi-
dence, a brief review can always be found on the opposite page. As a result of this constant juxtaposition of clinical scenario and medical evidence, readers are forced to think about which of their own treatment patterns are experience-based and which are evi-
dence-based merely by the presence of text on the opposite page.

There is always a price to pay for simplification. Whereas it seems fair to say that the author has made great efforts to be objective and evidence-based, in the end, the treatment recommenda-
tions are based on his conclusions of available data. In fairness, the author does acknowledge when insufficient medical evidence exists to make firm recommendations, but consensus papers from the American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association are less likely to be biased and are easily accessible on the Internet. Although the potential danger does exist for a text like this to be abused, it is not designed to be a cookbook and does not really provide enough detail for an inexperienced cli-

nian to take care of cardiac problems. The “user-friendly” format can be potentially misleading by making treatment decisions and plans seem simple when in actuality they can at times be quite complex. There may be a role for the text to provide enough infor-
mation to initiate an appropriate work-up and treatment plan, but expert consultation should still be sought.

Overall, Evidence-Based Manual of Coronary Care Management provides an excellent review of common cardiac problems, including myocardial infarction and unstable angina. Its unique structure allows the more in-depth discussions of the medical evidence to remain separate from the text that emphasizes clinical scenarios and treatment strategies. Although this manual does not seem to provide sufficient detail to be a guide for direct patient care, it will provide the reader with a solid background in both the treatment strategies and the weight of evidence that supports various therapies in common cardiac problems. On one level, it is a book for beginners, such as medical students or medical/surge-
cial interns, so that they can familiarize themselves with treatment algorithms and protocols. On another level, it is a book for advanced trainees such as residents and fellows and for noncardio-
ology attending surgeons who are interested in a fairly concise evidence-based systematic review.

Salvatore Costa, MD
Author, The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Housestaff Pocket Reference Guide
Cardiology Fellow
Boston Medical Center
Boston, Mass

Obesity: Impact on cardiovascular disease

Gerald F. Fletcher, Scott M. Grundy, Laura Hayman; Armonk, NY; 1999; Futura; 392 pages; $69.00. Obesity is the new epidemic in America. Recent data indicate that it is rapidly increasing, with 50% of Americans being over-
weight and 20% obese. The disease is very morbid and is a major contributor to type II diabetes, also on the increase. It only seems logical that cardiovascular disease is linked to the morbidity and mortality of obesity and is thus the basis for the book Obesity: Impact on cardiovascular disease. This book is well organized and covers many of the major issues. The background to the obesity epidemic is nicely outlined in “Part I: Epidemiology of obesity.” It touches on the genetic as well as environmental issues, con-
cluding with general ideas of prevention. A problem is that many of the references are 1998 and earlier, and the tenor of the prevention section is predominately general. “Part 2: Pathophysiology of obesity” is a collection of chapters on different aspects of the obesity disease. The “Obesity-related gene” sec-

tion is a brief overview. It would have been more complete with expansion on the twin studies. The somewhat displaced chapter on “Diet, drugs, and valvar heart disease” covers this contro-
versial area but falls short on real recommendations for exposed patients. Obesity and hypertension have been clinically associated for years, and this area is well covered in the related chapters. The work includes the relationships with obesity and the kidney and interesting changes in medulla function with high-fat diets. Vascular disease, obesity, and insulin resistance are also well cov-