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Book Reviews: Technical Books Section

...AN EXCELLENT BOOK FOR UNDERGRADUATES ...This excellent book is an important addition to existing forensic literature. I would heartily recommend it not only for all undergraduates and postgraduates, but also for every forensic pathologist...

Essentials of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, 1st Edition, by Anil Aggrawal. Soft cover, 11" x 8.5" x 1.5".
Avichal Publishing company, 8 Industrial Area, Trilokpur Road, Kala Amb 173 030, Distt. Sirmour (HP), Delhi Office: 1002 Faiz Road (opp. Hanuman Murti), Karol Bagh, New Delhi 110 005. . Email - apcmedicalbooks@yahoo.co.in; vipinguptaae@gmail.com; manchanda_rajiv@yahoo.co.in; anil@anilaggrawal.com; dr_anil@hotmail.com. Publication Date Jul 3, 2014. 647 pages, ISBN-13: 978-81–7739–441-2. Price: Rs 695.00.

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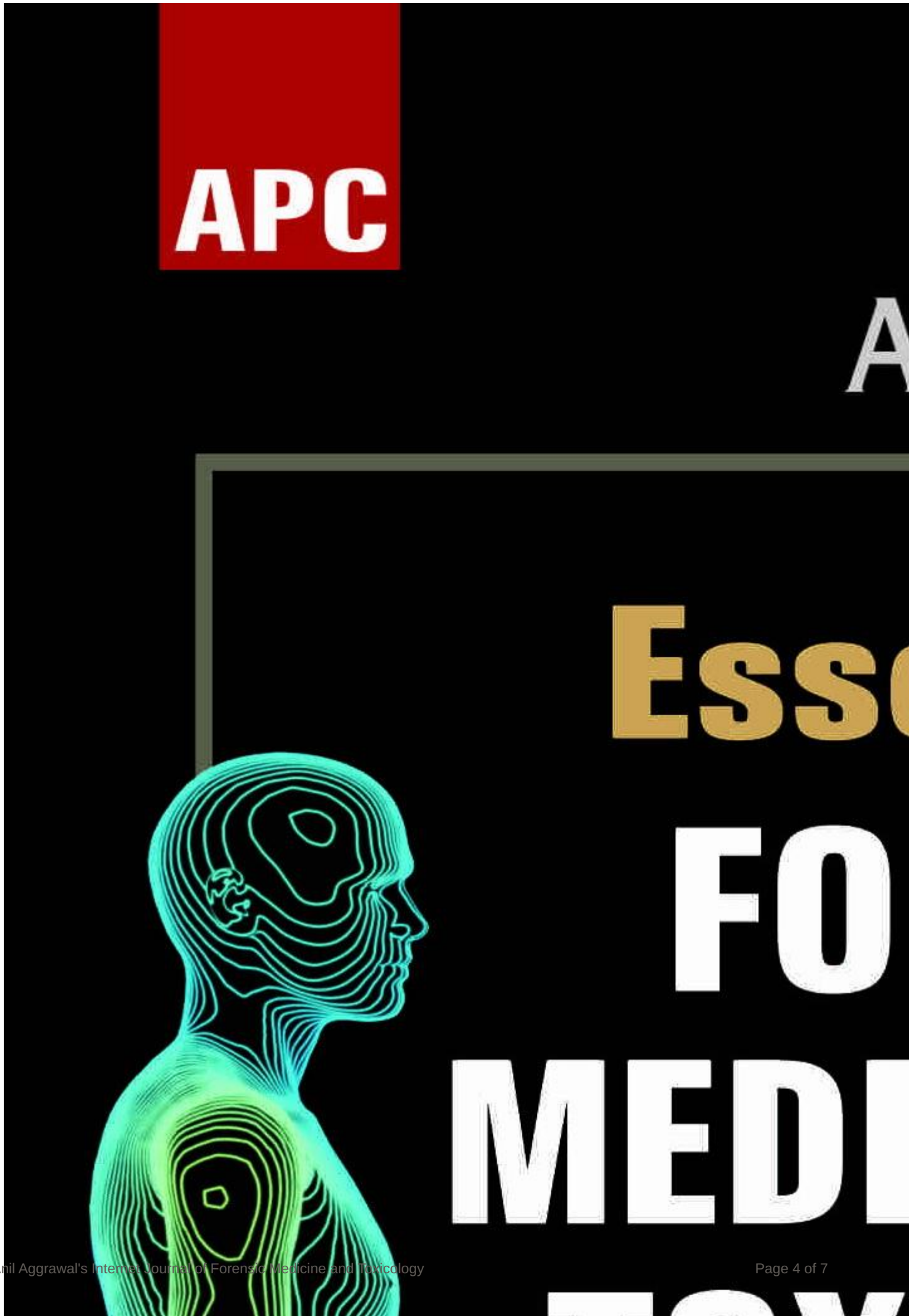
APC



The current book under review “Essentials of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology” has been written by the author in response to a large demand by the students for a comprehensive book which gives all essential information briefly and succinctly. Earlier Prof Aggrawal had written a more comprehensive “Textbook of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology”, which has already proved immensely popular.

“Essentials”, as the name suggests prunes down unessential information, and gives only what is essential for the student to understand a concept and write in exams. The book is however not a “condensed version” of the earlier book. The text has been entirely rewritten with a number of new figures and diagrams [eg pics of barbiturate blisters on page 562].

About 200 mnemonics and memory aids distributed throughout the book make the book very appealing to students. A typical mnemonic [appearing in chapter 19 on asphyxia on page 279] would illustrate the point:


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...“Essentials”, as the name suggests prunes down unessential information, and gives only what is ess

Memory Aid 1– **Classical signs of asphyxia**

C C T V **F** o **R E** veryone

C ongestion

C yanosis

T ardieu's spots [petechial hgs]

F luidity of blood

R t side heart engorged

E dema

The book has 3 very useful appendices. Appendix 1 deals with all relevant sections from IPC, CrPC and IEA, appendix 2 gives all fatal doses and fatal periods in a nutshell and appendix 3 gives important measurements of organs [weights, diameters etc].

The book is illustrated with very good and illustrative line diagrams.

Another good feature of the book is the neat arrangement of all information under 7 levels of heading. Each topics starts with a definition, and then goes on to list important salient features of the topic in a point wise fashion. The numbering system is very helpful to the student, and is similar to what the author used in the earlier “Textbook”. Thus a student reading, say, signs and symptoms of cyanide already knows he has to remember 8 points under CNS, 2 under CVS, 2 under respiratory system and so on.

The book gives a 2 page spread out in the beginning explaining the organization of this book. I have seen this in very few books. This is a good feature and helps the student understand the entire topography of the book, so to say.

All in all, I would say, it is a good book and students must read this book. I will certainly keep this book at hand for my own lectures and court appearances.

-Prateek Rastogi



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