

# Book Review

## Professor Thomas W. Shields' sixth edition

The only book on general thoracic surgery published continually since the early 1970s by the same editor now arrives in its sixth edition, 33 years after the publication of the original grey-jacketed text. In hindsight, the first edition of this book, edited by Professor Thomas W. Shields of Chicago in 1972, was a bit timid in its response to the then existing texts that failed to adequately address thoracic diseases. That first edition consisted of only 1006 pages, but included an account of the pioneering lung transplant performed by J.D. Hardy, as well as 49 chapters written by a total of 57 contributing authors. The preface was written by Paul Samson of Oakland, California.

The second edition, from the same editor, was released 11 years later (in 1983) and featured twice as many collaborators, 1072 pages and a black cover. It was still the only text dedicated exclusively to diseases of the chest. It was faulted for omitting esophageal diseases, which Professor Shields himself had lamented. The 1251-page third edition arrived in 1989, with 100 chapters in 19 sections written by 116 contributors, and now including the esophageal diseases. These first three editions were published by Lea & Febiger as single volumes. However, in 1994, the same publisher released the fourth edition in two volumes containing 1816 pages and 24 sections written by 143 collaborators. The fifth version was published in 2000 by Lippincott, Williams Wilkins. The number of pages was increased to 2443, and two new co-editors, Dr. Joseph LoCicero of Harvard Medical School and Dr. Ronald B. Ponn of Yale University, were recruited. In addition, this fifth incarnation had 190 chapters written by 216 authors.

The sixth edition of Professor T.W. Shields' book adds yet another co-editor, Valerie Rusch of Memorial Hospital in New York, and will soon be available worldwide. This most recent version features 30 sections in 2687 pages, comprising 197 chapters written by 241 contributing authors from all over the world, including Brazil. The practice of general thoracic surgery, which had seemed to reach the apex of its potential in the 1970s, proved, in the subsequent years, to be a vibrant specialty that was (and is) in a constant state of growth, as plainly evidenced by the successive and victorious editions of this text. As in all previous editions, Professor Shields illuminates all aspects of the specialty, addressing each in a contemporary, elegant and concise fashion. This book deserves a place on the library shelf of anyone who deals with thoracic diseases.

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