

**Anyone, Anything, Anytime: A History of Emergency Medicine**

Review by Elizabeth M. Dorn, MD, DTMH

**Bring 'Em All**

Review by Doug Franzen, MD, MEd

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**Anyone, Anything, Anytime: A History of Emergency Medicine**

Zink BJ

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Change agents make history in the serendipitous confluence of their particular character and the context of the time in which they lived. So reads this second edition of *Anyone, Anything, Anytime: A History of Emergency Medicine* by Brain Zink, a tale of tenacious pioneers in the rapidly changing medical world.

The book traces the incipient changes from the Flexner report in 1910, when general practitioners with often 1 year of spotty training did everything from house calls to appendectomies, through the era of rapid building of hospitals of the 1920s, when internal medicine and surgery were organizing into colleges with board certifications, through the 1950s, when the population flocked increasingly to the hospital for care but were met by unstocked rooms, manned by unsupervised interns or only a nurse to call in a physician from the office. It chronicles the foresight and willingness of certain figures to jump into the unknown to answer a growing need and create a new concept. In a time when out-of-hospital care was often delivered by hearses, a few seasoned physicians, seeing a new need and wanting to stem the expectation of around-the-clock calls, formed groups to staff the fledgling emergency departments, and, facing a paucity of support and adequate training, began to talk to one another and organize.

Zink quotes Wagner, who described the early physicians who chose emergency medicine:

“I often call them “the wagon train riders.” They were the people who would have jumped on a covered wagon and gone west 100 years earlier, and they had decided that this was something that piqued their interest and curiosity...so, they just appeared.”

Divided into 9 sections, the book chronicles the arduous and inspired task of forming feasible groups, fighting for

recognition and political standing, and procuring funding while trying to define themselves. Complete with detailed recounting of the seminal conversations, political alignments, salient speeches, articles, and decisions that changed the tide, the book illustrates through quotes and references how emergency medicine developed out of the political landscape and social reality of the time.

The exciting book tells the history from the formation of the first "residency" (of one intrepid resident) in Cincinnati in 1970, through the development of a novel curriculum while a scope of practice was being determined, to the creation of journals and research with academic integrity in the 1990s and 2000s, answering the growing need for excellence in out-of-hospital and emergency care.

I was glad to learn that; in an era when medical tomes were written by experts spouting dogma often not substantiated by references, Peter Rosen compiled the first fully referenced textbook of emergency medicine; Judith Tintinelli wrote 85% of the first emergency medicine study guide, which became internationally renowned as the manual for emergency medicine; and Gabor Kelen showed the Johns Hopkins board their own hubris and persuaded them to establish an academic department of emergency medicine.

While battling the American Medical Association and other professional organizations and specialties that opposed their existence, these emergency medicine pioneers wrote their own script, found funding, and finessed their discipline.

The first edition, published in 2005, documented emergency medicine's history up to the early 1990s. This second edition includes history through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in 2009, involving the emergency medicine events and controversies during that period, as well as growth of the corporate-owned emergency medicine groups and the backlash, with oral histories from key leaders from the 1990s and early 2000s, and photos and new formatting to make it a more enjoyable read.

The real importance of this book is how it successfully transmits the excitement the players felt at the birth of the specialty, and how history occurs on a grand scale through the convictions of the people who make it.

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## Bring 'Em All

Eugene Richards  
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*Bring 'Em All* was commissioned by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) in celebration of its 50th anniversary. With such prestigious origins, this collection of photographs and interviews could have been a compendium of the pioneers of emergency medicine. Instead it “pays homage to the heroic men and women of America’s emergency care system, who work to preserve the health of their communities every second of every hour of every day.” Although some of the founders of our specialty are discussed within, the pages contain a cross section of the everyday heroes of emergency medicine: not just physicians but also nurses, physician assistants, residents, paramedics, and flight nurses.

Brian Zink provides a brief history of the evolution of the specialty in the foreword. He ends with his answer to what possesses anyone to do what we do, an answer that carries just as much passion and insight as those provided by the residency applicants sitting across from me on interview days.

The book’s title comes from Jen Farris, the charge nurse on duty at Aurora Medical Center the night of the Aurora, CO, theater shooting. Although the emergency department (ED) was under renovation and only 2 physicians were on duty, her answer to the dispatcher about how many patients they could handle was “bring ‘em all.” The book opens with quotes from and photos of Paige Archey and Gilbert Pineda, two of the emergency physicians who helped care for the patients that night, but it is not all

high-intensity gore and glory. Rather, the book is intended to reflect something that every emergency provider is familiar with, something that happens on every shift: brief but intense and often surprisingly deep interactions, only the subject is now the provider, not the patient. “The stories in this book reflect the cadence of those interactions: short, concise, powerful.”

The images and interviews were captured by photographer Eugene Richards (also known for *The Knife and Gun Club: Scenes From an Emergency Room*, published in 1989). Richards traveled across the country for 2 years, working not just in EDs but also on the streets, in the wilderness, everywhere we are called on to provide care. Looking through the pages, I imagined how soldiers must have felt looking at images in *Life* magazine: this is an outsider, an artist, who understands what I do and has found a way to make it beautiful and present it to the world. Every picture is familiar. Even though I recognize only a few of the faces, I recognize the settings, the situations, the look of compassion on the face of a provider at the bedside. A hallway conversation. A smiling child. Breaking bad news to a family member over the telephone. I have been there. Any one of us could be in these images.

Although most of us have never experienced something as intense as the Aurora shootings, the words of Dr. Archey are something that all of us can identify with: “[W]e managed somehow. We just put our heads down and kept moving.” That could be said about most shifts. *Bring 'Em All* truly provides a “glimpse into the heart and soul of the specialty and what it means to serve on medicine’s front line.” As Drs. Kivela and Jouriles write in the introduction, I too feel privileged to serve alongside the accomplished clinicians featured in these pages. A book like this brings out the heart of what we do.

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