

Preface



Jean Deslauriers, MD, FRCS(C)
Guest Editor

In the preface of his *de Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543), Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564) wrote that anatomy should rightly be regarded as the firm foundation of the whole art of medicine and its essential preliminary. This observation is even more pertinent to the art of surgery, in which safe techniques and avoidance of intraoperative mishaps are largely dependent on adequate knowledge and understanding of the normal anatomy. A thoracic surgeon undertaking a pulmonary resection must, for instance, be familiar with the anatomic arrangements of the hilar structures, both normal and their common variations, if she or he wants to be able to correlate imaging and intraoperative findings, operate safely, avoid incomplete or improper operations, and preserve healthy lung tissue whenever possible. Ultimately, all surgeons need and must have an anatomy book that can be referenced daily and which represents a basis upon which they can integrate new imaging modalities and surgical approaches.

This issue of *Thoracic Surgery Clinics* is the first of two issues devoted to the study of thoracic anatomy. It is written by surgeons who possess detailed knowledge of a particular segment of thoracic anatomy—whether it is surface anatomy, chest wall, airway, or lungs—who comprehend it, and who are able to establish structural, functional, and imaging relationships. As shown throughout this issue, the essential facts of

anatomy found in early texts are still important, but they have evolved and developed into a more refined and modern science that must be well known if one is to ensure that each patient gets the best possible operation for his or her thoracic disease.

The creation of anatomy articles such as those written for this issue of the *Thoracic Surgery Clinics* can only be achieved through the cooperation of numerous, particularly creative, and dedicated people. In this respect, we were privileged to be associated with Alex and David Baker of DNA Illustrations, Inc., who provided anatomically precise artwork done with the most modern technology. Only a surgeon can appreciate the degree of patience and work involved in the making of such outstanding drawings, which should be useful not only to students of thoracic surgery but also to practicing surgeons. The Bakers have taken great care to precisely correlate each author's thoughts with their own work. The process began with reference material taken from existing illustrations, photographs, or even hand-drawn sketches scribbled on napkins. Based on these ideas, drawings were made and they were sent to me and to individual authors for initial review. After revisions and corrections had been made, a finished line drawing was completed and scanned, and color was added. Proofs of these color illustrations were then sent again to me and each author for final approval

before being released to the publisher. In writing the legends for each plate, great care was taken to make them as brief as possible for easier understanding by readers. Most importantly, the drawings were done in a homogeneous fashion throughout the book.

The hiring of expert medical artists able to create such impressive artwork would not have been possible without adequate financial support. We were thus very fortunate to have Johnson & Johnson Medical Products (Ethicon Canada) as our partners, and they provided the necessary funding for the anatomical illustrations. Without their dedicated support and commitment to academic excellence, it is obvious that we would never have been able to produce such work.

I am also grateful to Dr. Mark Ferguson, Consulting Editor, and to Elsevier, for their open minds on the idea of publishing a thoracic anatomy issue. Finally, I would like to personally thank and commend Ms. Catherine Bewick, whose acceptance of delays in production made my life a lot easier over the past two years.

Jean Deslauriers, MD, FRCS(C)

Laval University
2725, chemin Sainte-Foy
Québec, QC G1V 4G5
Canada

E-mail address:

hopitalaval.chir-thor@ssss.gouv.qc.ca