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The Newsletter of the  
Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons

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Nancy E. Epstein, M.D., Editor

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**CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

The Joint Spine and Peripheral Nerve Section met in Cancun, Mexico for its annual winter meeting from February 11, 1989 through February 15, 1989. In the four scientific sessions, there were fifty-three submitted papers by members of the Section and thirty-two scientific posters. Each day a portion of the scientific program was devoted to topics related to the spine and included spinal cord injury, pediatric spinal injuries, and spinal tumors.

The fourth Mayfield Award was presented to Richard K. Simpson, Jr., M.D., from Houston, Texas. The title of his presentation was "Corticomotor Evoked Potential Changes During Spinal Cord Ischemia and Reperfusion". The caliber of the paper submitted was excellent and we plan to continue to give that award.

The membership of the Section continues to expand and we are endeavoring to enlarge the activities for members.

As you know, we have made an effort to expand educational courses and now courses devoted to the spine are offered before the annual meeting of the AANS, as well as before the meeting of the CNS. This spring there will be courses on Caspar instrumentation of the cervical spine, a cervical spine stabilization course under the direction of Dr. Peter Klara, a cervical spine stabilization course directed by Dr. Volker Sonntag, and a course on lumbar instrumentation directed by Dr. Sanford Larson.

Dr. Edward Connolly is making progress as Chairman of the Spine Task Force. A separate report will be presented to the Board of Directors of the AANS and the CNS on the progress of this committee which is working diligently to develop spinal fellowships within neurosurgery.

It has come to my attention that the Spine Section of the AANS/CNS with Corresponding and Honorary membership in the sections, should contain the use of the additional word "adjunct". We are sensitive to the concerns of the AANS/CNS regarding titles of individuals who might be members of the sections who are not members of the parent organization. However, we believe it is cumbersome, for example, to have some with an "adjunct corresponding member of the Spine and Peripheral Nerve Section".

We wish to propose that any member who is a corresponding member of the parent organization should have the privilege of holding the same title with the Sections without the additional title of "adjunct".

We have been working diligently to increase the number and quality of spine oriented courses and seminars being presented at the AANS and CNS annual meetings. We have been fortunate in obtaining prime time and not only the cooperation, but the strong support of our parent organizations.

This is the last newsletter I will present as Chairman of this Section. Having been involved with the organization since its inception, it has been an honor to serve in this capacity, and I thank all the members for their support during these years.

Respectfully submitted,

Stewart B. Dunsker, M.D.  
Chairman

**FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
SPINAL TASK FORCE OF THE  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROLOGICAL  
SURGEONS (AANS) AND CONGRESS OF  
NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS (CNS).**

The Task Force on the Spine was created by the AANS and CNS at the request of Dr. George Tindall in early 1988. As Chairman-Elect of the Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves of the AANS and CNS (JS), I was asked to Chair this committee. This Task Force was charged with strengthening Neurosurgery's role in the treatment of spinal disorders by being a catalyst between the JS and the various governing organizations of neurosurgery.

The committee is composed of Dr. Christopher B. Shields, who was president of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Dr. David Kelly, Jr., and Dr. Sidney Tolchin, both members of the American Board of Neurological Surgery, Dr. Jim Robertson, a member of the Residency Review Committee for Neurosurgery, Dr. Volker Sonntag, member of the Executive Committee of the Joint Section of Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves, and Dr. Ernie Fokes, representing the Joint Council of State Surgical Societies. Since the original committee was formed, Dr. Shelley N. Chou, Chairman of the Residency Review Committee for Neurological Surgery and Dr. Michael Walker of the National Institute of Health (NINDS) have joined the Task Force. Dr. Jim Robertson has been made the Vice-Chairman of the Task Force.

The Task Force has met four times since its creation; the last meeting was in September at the Congress of Neurological Surgeons meeting in Seattle. During the year the Task Force has developed short-term and long-term goals. The long-term goal is to identify neurological surgery, by both the medical profession and the public, as the specialty most involved in the surgical treatment of spinal disorders. We feel this can be accomplished by promoting academic and research interests in spinal disorders by neurosurgeons, supporting improved requirements in the neurosurgery training programs related to the spine, by

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## FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SPINAL TASK FORCE

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developing fellowships in spinal surgery, and promoting neurological surgery publications related to spinal disorders.

A general survey of all the members of the AANS and CNS was undertaken to find the volume of spinal surgery being performed by neurosurgeons in the United States and Canada and the feeling of the members on the desirability of spinal fellowships. A survey of the training programs in neurological surgery was also carried out involving the volume of spinal surgery being performed and also the feeling of the program directors on the need for spinal fellowships and their impact upon neurosurgery training programs. These results were published in the Letters to the Editor in the Journal of Neurological Surgery (JNS). A future survey will be undertaken to find out the number of formal and informal spinal fellowships under neurosurgical or joint neurosurgical-orthopaedic auspices being offered in the United States and Canada. It will also include specific information about each fellowship.

It was the feeling of the Task Force that the biggest weakness in neurological training in relation to spinal surgery is the lack of experience in thoracic and lumbar spinal stabilization. As a solution, an intensive course in spinal stabilization for the practicing neurosurgeon was proposed. This technical fellowship is being developed by Dr. Sanford Larson at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and he feels that by the spring of 1989 this type of fellowship will be available. The Task Force would also like to develop formal spinal fellowships that would be from one to two years in length to develop a cadre of academic neurosurgeons with a deep commitment to spinal disorders, research, and teaching. The Task Force has asked the Residency Review Committee in Neurosurgery to increase the requirements related to spinal surgery training programs. The Residency Review Committee and American Board of Neurological Surgery are presently revising their surgery forms and hopefully will expand the spinal surgery portion.

We have also asked the AANS and CNS to sponsor and financially support the membership of the Joint Spine Section on the Board of Directors of the National Coordinating Council of Spinal Cord Injuries. This is a predominantly consumer oriented political action group in Washington, D.C.

The Task Force has developed a close and constant relationship with the JS of the AANS and CNS and plans to have as many members of the Task Force as possible attend the Executive Committee meetings of the JS to help this Section coordinate its role with the governing bodies of neurosurgery.

The Task Force would like to thank all the members of organized neurosurgery for their past and continued support.

Edward S. Connolly  
Chairman  
Task Force

## THE CERVICAL SPINE RESEARCH SOCIETY

The Cervical Spine Research Society is composed of both neurosurgeons and orthopaedists, though the latter far outnumber the former. We would like to encourage more neurosurgeons to apply for membership in this society. Membership requires:

1. Board certification in neurosurgery
2. Presentation of a paper at a meeting as the senior author
3. Letters of support from 2 members of the society

Further information regarding activities of this society may be obtained from:

Paul Cooper, M.D.  
550 First Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

### Register Now!

for the Sixth Annual Meeting of the AANS/CNS  
Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves  
to be held at the South Seas Plantation  
Captiva Island, Florida  
February 7-11, 1990  
For further information, contact Cheryl LaFalce  
at the AANS National Office, (312) 692-9500

## MORBIDITY/MORTALITY REPORT

A Morbidity and Mortality Committee has been established to assess unusual complications in cervical, thoracic, or lumbar spinal surgery. The Committee would appreciate the anonymous submission of unusual complications and/or deaths which have occurred in 1989. Please send a summary of these cases including any available X-rays to:

Nancy Epstein, M.D.  
Long Island Neurosurgical Associates  
410 Lakeville Road, Suite 100  
New Hyde Park, LI, NY 11042

A summary of the morbidity and mortality encountered for 1989 will be presented at next year's meeting provided there has been a good response to this inquiry. It would be helpful if submissions included the total number of cases performed in any given area. Any recommendations for or against spinal instrumentation, monitoring techniques etc. would be welcomed.

## MAYFIELD AWARD FOR 1990: INSTRUCTIONS FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

The Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves announces the Mayfield Award in spine or spinal cord research for 1990. This award is annually conferred on a resident in a training program in the United States or Canada for meritorious clinical or laboratory research on the spine or spinal cord.

To qualify, the resident must be the primary investigator and must originate and implement the project during training.



## MAYFIELD AWARD FOR 1990:

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The award honors research to be completed by July 1, 1989, must have been initiated by residents during their training period and concluded within two years of completion of residency.

Research already published or presented cannot be considered for this award. An abstract not to exceed 500 words must be submitted by September 1, 1989. All abstracts will be considered by the program committee for presentation at the South Seas Plantation, Captiva Island, Florida. Each abstract must be accompanied by a letter from a program director documenting the research represents the resident's work primarily. Abstracts and cover letter should be mailed to the address below:

Donald J. Prolo, M.D.  
203 DiSalvo Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95128

The recipient of this award will receive an honorarium of \$500.00 plus registration, hotel, and travel arrangements at the annual meeting of the Joint Section at the South Seas Plantation, Captiva Island, Florida, February 7-11, 1990.

## MAYFIELD AWARD RECIPIENT FOR 1989

**RICHARD K. SIMPSON, JR., M.D.**

Doctor Richard K. Simpson, Jr., is the recipient of the Mayfield Award for 1989. Doctor Simpson, 35, originally from Atlanta, Georgia, will complete his neurosurgical residency this year at Baylor College of Medicine and will remain there on the faculty. During his premedical years at Coker College in South Carolina, he received the Susan Coker Watson Scholarship for a year of study at Oxford University in 1974. At the Medical University of South Carolina he was conferred a Ph.D. in 1980 and an M.D. in 1982.

His research projects have included evoked potentials and experimental spinal cord injury, microdialysis and experimental spinal cord ischemia, transplantation in the central nervous system, and neurosurgical management of penetrating spinal injury. Doctor Simpson has already co-authored forty papers, two chapters, and written a book. The MAYFIELD AWARD 1989 honors his paper presented in Cancun on February 12, 1989 entitled "Corticomotor Evoked Potential Changes During Spinal Cord Ischemia and Reperfusion".

## COURSE OFFERINGS

COURSE:	Practical Course In Spinal Instrumentation
OFFERED:	July 9-15, 1989
SPONSOR:	The Department of Neurosurgery Medical College of Wisconsin
CO-SPONSORED BY:	Joint Section on Spinal Disorders of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons

DIRECTOR: Sanford J. Larson, M.D., Ph.D.

LOCATION: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

FACULTY: Gregory J. Bennett, M.D., Joseph F. Cusick, M.D., James G. Egnatchik, M.D., David C. Hemmy, M.D., Dennis J. Maiman, M.D., Ph.D.

## DESCRIPTION:

### I. Practical Course in Spinal Instrumentation

The six day course will concentrate on instructing neurosurgeons in the practical aspects of spinal instrumentation. Techniques will be taught in didactic sessions and in workshops using cadavers, plastic models, and animal vertebral columns. This course will provide hands-on experience with diverse types of spine instrumentation, including Knodt, Harrington, Luque, and Cotrel-Dubousset rods, and Luque and Steffee pedicle plate systems.

### II. Limited Enrollment

Registration is limited to 18 participants to insure personal attention by the faculty. Applications will be accepted in the order received. For further information please contact:

Jill Webster  
Department of Neurosurgery  
8700 West Wisconsin Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53226  
(414) 257-5408

COURSE: First Annual Spine Workshop

OFFERED: November 10-11, 1988

SPONSOR: Barrow Neurological Institute

DIRECTORS: R.F. Spetzler, M.D., V.K.H. Sonntag, M.D.

LOCATION: Phoenix, Arizona

## DESCRIPTION:

To provide comprehensive and up-to-date information on the surgical management of spine disorders. Lectures and hands-on workshops are designed to enhance the participants' clinical skills. The course will be of particular interest to neurosurgeons, orthopaedists, and other related specialists involved in the care of patients with spine disorders.

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS FOR 1990 MEETING

Dr. Ed Tarlov has informed me that the deadline for abstracts this year will be about October 1. The topic for the special symposium will probably be complications, with special attention being given to the topic of instrumentation.

Send abstract of papers and posters to:

Edward Tarlov, M.D.  
Lahey Clinic Medical Center  
41 Mall Road  
Burlington, Massachusetts 01805

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## SUGGESTIONS FROM SOME EXPERTS FOR PAPERS, POSTERS, AND SLIDES

Ten minute papers are some of the most difficult to deliver. Therefore some of the experts from the Spine Section were polled regarding their recommendations:

1. Some authors felt that papers should not be read. "I think it is very important that a speaker not read off a paper for two reasons: first, it tends to put the audience to sleep, and second, they fail to use the pointer to point out things on the slides because they are reading.
2. Others noted that well thought out manuscripts, prepared in a conversational style, would not bore the audience, while also guaranteeing that all important points would be covered without time overruns.
3. Irrespective of the mode of presentation, the speaker needs to prepare his/her presentation well in advance. Papers should ideally be presented to a group of peers ahead of time so that the author(s) may make appropriate alterations based on the critique.
4. Posters should be concise: one or at most two points are sufficient for a poster. Similarly, diagrams, radiographs, and verbal summaries should be succinct and large enough to be easily viewed from a distance. Long paragraphs, small X-ray reproductions, and poorly executed illustrations detract from effective posters.

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