

# BOOKS WORTH READING

## Waking Up During Surgery: A True-Life Account

(NAPSA)—For thousands of patients each year who trust that their surgery will be pain-free, anesthetic awareness is a rude awakening.

Anesthetic awareness is the failure of anesthetic drugs to keep patients asleep and/or free of pain during surgery. Jeanette Liska, a survivor of anesthetic awareness, has written a harrowing account of her experience and how she put the pieces of her life back together to help others who have had similar experiences.

“Drowning in an ocean of searing agony, I sensed the skein of my entire life unraveling, thread by thread,” writes Liska in *Silenced Screams, Surviving Anesthetic Awareness During Surgery: A True-Life Account* (AANA Publishing, Inc., \$22.95).

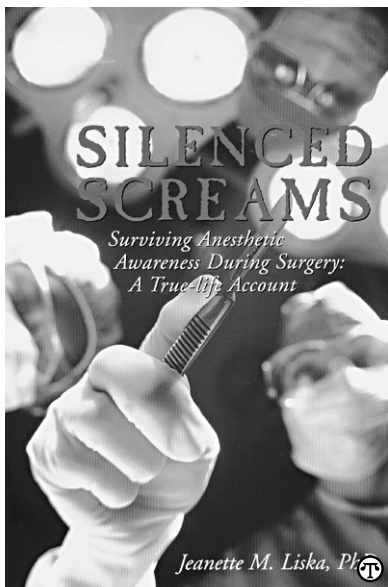
Liska’s routine hernia repair turned into a two-hour endurance test of pain and fear when the anesthetics she was given failed to keep her asleep or mask her pain, but did make it impossible for her to communicate her plight to her anesthesiologist or surgeon.

Although anesthesia mortality rates have dropped from two per 10,000 to about one per 250,000 since the early 1980s, it has been estimated that anesthetic awareness may occur in as many as seven out of every 1,000 surgeries.

Liska also writes about the 13 years since her fateful surgery, years she has devoted to helping fellow victims. For her, this book is part of her recovery, part of her effort to achieve closure.

“Writing about my experience with anesthetic awareness has allowed me to take a horrifying experience and affect the lives of others positively,” Liska says.

Suzanne Brown, CRNA, former chair of the Council for Public



**An ordeal of pain inspired a woman to help others.**

Interest in Anesthesia, has been involved with the book from the start. The council co-published the book.

“The council’s foremost mission for more than a decade has been to educate the general public, as well as anesthesia and other healthcare providers, about various issues relative to anesthesia care, including the possibility of anesthetic awareness,” says Brown. “Although anesthesia today is safer than it has ever been, efforts dedicated to continually improving patient monitoring and safety are ongoing.”

Research into how to prevent anesthetic awareness is continuing, with technology being enlisted to let anesthesia providers know if a patient may have been inadequately anesthetized.

To learn more about *Silenced Screams*, go to [www.aana.com](http://www.aana.com) or call 847-692-7050, ext. 3009.