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The Macintosh Laryngoscope vs. the New Airtraq Device

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Sixty adults were enrolled. **All patients in the Airtraq group and all but one in the Macintosh group were intubated on the first attempt**, but the mean intubation difficulty score was significantly lower in the Airtraq group (0.2 vs. 1.4, respectively, with 0 representing perfect intubation). Time to intubation did not differ between the groups. Anesthetists rated the Airtraq easier to use than the Macintosh laryngoscope (mean scores of 1.2 vs. 2.0 on a 0–10 visual analog scale).

The authors conclude that in patients with normal airways, the Airtraq is easier to use and provides intubating conditions that are comparable or superior to those of the Macintosh laryngoscope.

Comment: Direct laryngoscopy is unnecessarily difficult and traumatic for the upper airway, and its development predated modern optics. **The time has come to retire the beloved metal laryngoscope — it has served its purpose, and many superior options are now available.**