

Book Reviews

ELEMENTI DI MIOPATOLOGIA. By Mauro Marolda. Published by Editoriale Scientifica (Napoli, Italy). 1986. 138 pages. Price approx. \$18.00 Cdn.

This is a concise and delightful monograph of muscle pathology written in Italian. It is intended as an introductory text rather than a definitive work, and is up to date with modern methods of histochemistry and electron microscopy. It is well organized into categories of neurogenic and myopathic alterations of muscles. For such a short book it is beautifully illustrated with well chosen, high quality colour photomicrographs, electron micrographs, and numerous line drawings that are very effective in emphasizing principal findings. Histograms of fibre types and morphometrics also are discussed. Humorous cartoons throughout the book are not at all distracting and help maintain the reader's interest. The quality of printing is exceptionally high. I recommend this book to residents and neurologists wanting a brief but thorough overview of muscle pathology, and even readers not fluent in Italian would enjoy and learn from the abundant illustrations that transcend language barriers. I hope that French and English language editions are eventually published.

*Harvey B. Sarnat
Calgary, Alberta*

STROKE: A CRITICAL APPROACH TO DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT. By D.T. Wade, R. Langton Hewer, C.E. Skilbeck and R.M. David. Published by Chapman and Hall Ltd., London and Year Book Medical Publishers Inc., Chicago, 1985. 377 pages. \$58.50 Cdn.

"Stroke: a Critical Approach to Diagnosis, Treatment and Management" is a book written for the clinician who cares for stroke patients. Richard Langton Hewer, the senior author, is the head of the Stroke Unit at Frenchay Hospital in Bristol, one of Britain's foremost clinical centres for the care of stroke victims. He is well qualified to provide a global perspective of the clinical management of stroke.

The book is divided into four major parts with an appendix. Part one, entitled "Epidemiology, diagnosis and treatment of stroke", presents information usually found in classical neurological texts. It is compact, well referenced but maybe somewhat limited in depth. The chapter on treatment and complications of acute stroke shows an admirable honesty in admitting the extent of our therapeutic ignorance and may rankle some traditional clinicians.

In part two the authors examine the methodological issue of clinically assessing cognitive, communicative, physical and emotional status. Part three considers recovery and rehabilitation in the same clinical dimensions. As in the chapter on acute treatment, the authors attempt to critically evaluate therapeutic efficacy of various rehabilitative interventions. It may just be possible that the criteria for valid evidence were not applied as stringently as in the former chapter.

Finally, part four focusses on organizational and economic aspects of stroke care and is of use to clinicians charged with planning health care delivery.

The particular strength of this book lies in its comprehensive clinical and methodological approach to the holistic care of the stroke patient. The emphasis on validated treatment efficacy and assessment reliability is novel in this type of literature. Primary and secondary prevention, probably the most effective interventions, were barely touched upon. Clearly identified sections on the current understanding of patho-physiology and on clinical prognosis would make this book more complete.

Despite these minor shortcomings, I feel that "Stroke: a Critical Approach to Diagnosis, Treatment and Management" should be readily available in any unit attempting integrated stroke care.

*Ralph Bloch
Hamilton, Ontario*

STROKE — PATHOPHYSIOLOGY, DIAGNOSIS, MANAGEMENT, VOLUMES 1 AND 2. Edited by Henry J.M. Barnett, J.P. Mohr, Bennett M. Stein, and Frank M. Yatsu. Published by Churchill Livingstone. 1264 pages. \$254.50 Cdn.

After decades of neglect, the study of stroke appears to be achieving its deserved role in the hierarchy of human illness. Marshall's "Management of Cerebrovascular Disease", a small though excellent compendium dealing with most aspects of cerebrovascular disease, was the only textbook for many years. In the past few years, several more comprehensive updated texts have appeared. The two volumes on Stroke edited by Barnett, Mohr, Stein and Yatsu, however, are a totally comprehensive encyclopedia written largely by a group of authors many of whom are world renowned in their expertise. Volume I deals with pathophysiology, diagnosis and clinical manifestations of stroke. Volume II details vascular anomalies, medical conditions relating to stroke, and management (both medical and surgical).

The book encompasses every conceivable aspect of acute and chronic cerebrovascular disease. It is well written and well illustrated and the printed format is pleasing to the eye. However, it is not a book for the beginner, in spite of the broad spectrum of interest detailed in the preface. It is the best of its kind for the internist, the neurologist, the neurosurgeon and all others wishing access to world expertise in virtually every aspect one needs to know about stroke. It is essential not only for every university medical library, but also for libraries in hospitals and other medical institutions where state-of-the-art knowledge is needed. Private individuals, whether physicians or paramedical specialists should have no quibble with the price which is very appropriate to the encyclopedic information available.

Chapters which I personally found interesting or well illustrated were "Biochemistry of cerebral ischemia", "Brain edema", "Arachidonic acid metabolism", "Extracranial arterial disease", and "Management of cerebrovascular problems". The chapter on Binswanger's disease is fascinating, comprehensive and convincing, as is the description of Moyamoya. A few chapters might benefit from extra tables and illustrations.

These two volumes are unlikely to be surpassed in the foreseeable future. The editors should be congratulated for produc-

ing such a fine piece of work. No library, whether personal or public, can afford to be without it.

*J.W. Norris,
Toronto, Ontario*

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEUROPHYSIOLOGY. Third Edition. Edited by R.F. Schmidt. Published by Springer-Verlag. 346 pages. \$27.00 Cdn.

In some ways Schmidt's *Fundamentals of Neurophysiology* is a superb book. It really does start from the basic fundamentals and logically and clearly develop most of the major themes of neurophysiology. The illustrations have been improved and the text honed, presumably based on experience gained from the first two editions. It has multiple choice questions for the student to test his knowledge after each section.

However, the text has really not kept pace with the subject. Schmidt's preface is dated Summer, 1985, but the bibliography contains virtually no references after 1981. Only one paragraph is devoted to peptides including a passing mention that they may serve as neuromodulators. This lack of emphasis is strange considering Schmidt's own interest in pain pathways where peptides feature so prominently. Similarly, I could find no mention of single channel recording, a technique developed by his fellow countrymen Neher and Sakmann, despite the enormous impact of this technique on the field. None of the recent, striking advances in the molecular structure and function of sodium channels, ACh channels, the Na-K pump etc. is to be found. Even at the systems level recent work is ignored. The role of Golgi tendon organs is given in terms of protective reflexes, such as the "jackknife reflex," despite the clear demonstration by Rymer and his colleagues a few years ago that Group III afferents are responsible for such reflexes, not Golgi tendon organs.

I am forced to conclude that despite its strengths for teaching some introductory courses, major revisions to update the material are essential. Unless this is done, "*Fundamentals of Neurophysiology*" will become a highly evolved dinosaur, but even the most advanced dinosaurs could not escape extinction in the face of a changing world. It would be a shame if this fine textbook were to suffer a similar fate.

*Richard B. Stein,
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BEHAVIORAL NEUROLOGY: A PRACTICAL APPROACH. By Howard S. Kirschner. Published by Churchill Livingstone. 230 pages.

This book lives up to its name in offering a practical approach to behavioral neurology. It consists of 12 chapters. Chapter 2, on the bedside mental status examination, is useful although short. The author's use of "short term memory" to mean recent memory is misleading, although clinicians tend to use this term inaccurately. There are chapters dealing with most of the major areas in behavioral neurology and a chapter on the behavioral aspects of epilepsy. The section on the agraphias may be faulted for being too short.

The discussion of the various theoretical aspects of neuro-behavioral syndromes is adequate though not extensive.

The book is well written; it is concise, clear and easy to read. There are helpful tables, well reproduced CT scans, a few MRI's and useful diagrams. The chapters are well referenced.

This book would not replace the more detailed texts and monographs in the field but, as a concise review of a primer, serves a purpose. It is recommended for neurologists, residents and neuroscientists as general reading.

*Andrew Kertesz,
London, Ontario*

NEUROLOGY IN PRIMARY CARE. Edited by Robert C. Cantu. Published by MacMillan Publishing Co., 1985. 424 pages. \$43.50 Cdn.

To a large extent, I liked this book. To quote the preface, "*NEUROLOGY IN PRIMARY CARE* is a practical and current reference covering all of the commonly encountered disorders of the central nervous system. We have excluded the esoteric . . . we focus primarily on recognising and treating the neurologic disorders likely to be seen in a primary - care practice." Indeed, the authors mainly adhere to this; for example, in the chapter on Degenerative CNS Diseases, a list of the disorders is given and then the crucial ones such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are discussed in detail. In the chapters on Metabolic Diseases, however, the author cannot suppress his neurological compulsiveness, and describes everything including Marchiafava-Bignami's and Pelizaeus-Merzbacher's diseases — conditions I have yet to see in 20 years of pure referral neurology. Conversely, the same author could give more detail in his chapter on headache.

The references are well chosen, up to date and not too numerous, though the section on cranial trauma gives mainly sports medicine references. Most illustrations are excellent. There are good, well reproduced CT scans and many very fine line drawings, but the line drawings in the Neuropathies section were hard to see even with my glasses. Under Trauma, there are some rather large, not too clear photographs of intracranial clots of doubtful instructive value, good line drawings as in the same author's chapter on spinal trauma would have been much better.

Much of the book is very practical, clear and useful, concentrating on the meat and not the sauce; particularly, the chapter on epilepsy. It has some excellent tables enabling some important information to be gleaned easily. The book's main fault is that of many multi-author works, namely a lack of overall style and uniformity. In massive reference tomes this is acceptable, but it detracts from a text of this type. For instance, the writing in the chapters on Vascular Disease is fluid and extensive, whereas that in the chapter on Neuropathies is as terse as a nerve action potential.

I think this is a good book, almost achieving its stated purpose and worth buying now. With attention to the overall plan and style of the book and tighter editorial control the next edition could be a winner.

*Charles A. Simpson,
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