

This handy pocket guide will be useful for many residents and clinicians, especially in those specialties that treat Alzheimer's disease. It is a worthy addition to departmental and hospital libraries and, predictably, will be used quite frequently.

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**THE NEUROLOGY OF VISION. CONTEMPORARY NEUROLOGY SERIES.** 2001. By Johnathan D. Trobe. Published by Oxford University Press. 451 pages. C\$192.00 approx.

The Neurology of Vision is a recent addition to the Contemporary Neurology Series. The book is comprised of 20 chapters divided into six parts.

Part 1 provides an overview of the anatomy and physiology of human visual system. It reviews basic optics, retinal physiology, anatomy of the visual pathways from optic nerve to visual cortex, and the anatomy underlying visual integrative function. This part provides a quick review of clinically relevant basic science of the visual system.

Part 2 covers the symptoms of a failing visual system as manifestations of optical, retinocortical or visual integration disorders. Emphasis is placed on relating symptoms to anatomy and pathophysiology.

Part 3 provides an overview of the tests used to assess visual function including clinical methods, interpretation of automated perimetry and electrophysiological testing of the visual system. The text explains the rationale for each test, reviews testing methods, and provides an approach to interpretation of the tests.

Part 4 is concerned with specific disorders of the visual system and is organized topographically and subdivided according to etiology. The text provides a clear and concise overview of ocular and neurologic disorders that are important for the practicing neurologist and ophthalmologist to be aware of when assessing patients with visual symptoms. The signs and symptoms, pathophysiology and appropriate management of each disorder are reviewed. This section includes 60 color plates of fundus or fluorescein angiogram photographs with examples of common and important abnormalities. Boxes are used for rapid reference and summary as well as to emphasize important points. Tables provide important lists of information for rapid reference and are used effectively to contrast related disorders. Figures in this section include flow charts outlining suggested management of many of the disorders covered in this book. Text is complemented with examples of neuroimaging showing lesions of the visual system and figures illustrating relevant anatomy. Finally, this section also provides instruction in clinical methods used to assess for disorders of visual integrative function such as Balint's syndrome.

Part 5 provides an overview of nonorganic visual disturbances. Symptoms suggestive of nonorganic visual disturbance are reviewed. Instruction is provided in clinical methods used to detect nonphysiologic deficits of the visual system. There is a brief overview of pertinent psychiatric disorders.

The last section of the text provides multiple-choice questions based upon cases that allow readers to test their knowledge of the material present in the preceding parts. Answers are provided with adequate discussion.

In summary, this book provides an excellent overview of

common or important neurologic and ophthalmic disorders that result in visual disturbance. It provides a practical guide for clinicians. I highly recommend this book for practicing neurologists, ophthalmologists and residents training in these disciplines.

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**MERRITT'S NEUROLOGY HANDBOOK.** 2001. Tenth Edition. Edited by Pietro Mazzoni, Lewis P. Rowland. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 528 pages. C\$70.79 approx.

The major purpose of this pocket sized text book, as stated in the preface, is to provide a concise, portable version of the essential information contained in the Tenth Edition of Merritt's Neurology Text. In other words, if you want a briefer, more portable version of the latest and excellent edition of Merritt's Neurology Text, this is the book for you.

The handbook has several important features. First of all, it has a most convenient two-page list of abbreviations, which will probably save readers much frustration. It has a very detailed table of contents, which in fact occupies the first six pages of the book. The first two sections of the book deal with symptoms of neurologic disorders and diagnostic tests in neurology. These are then followed by the usual disease-orientated sections dealing with infections of the nervous system, cerebral vascular diseases, peripheral neuropathies and other disorders. Finally, the book concludes with chapters on systemic diseases and general medicine, environmental neurology, which includes alcoholism and drug dependence, rehabilitation and a final chapter on ethical and legal guidelines.

As the authors state, this book is essentially a summary of the essential information contained in the longer parent textbook. As such, it is difficult to see who the handbook will actually be useful for. If you are going to read a neurology text at your desk, you are much better off with the longer textbook, which itself is still quite short. If you wish to carry around a neurology book in the course of your daily work, the handbook is clearly much more convenient, but does not really seem to be a practical helpful book for everyday neurological work. For example, the short section on herpes simplex encephalitis does mention acyclovir, but like many sections of this book, does not supply any practical information such as drug dosages. The section on Parkinson's disease does name most of the useful drugs, but again the information is not specific enough to assist the clinician in the use of these drugs, especially the amateur clinician.

The section on migraine is rather peculiar, in that it states that the category of common migraine includes "tension headache", thereby ignoring most of the hard work in headache classification done in the last ten years. For migraine with aura, it states that focal symptoms are present in a small proportion of attacks, while mainstream thinking would indicate that, in fact, the great majority of migraine aura symptoms, if not all, are focal in nature, as opposed to premonitory symptoms.

In short, I do have reservations about this book. Perhaps it ties itself too slavishly to the parent textbook in terms of organisation. For example, one can question how useful a one page chapter on neuropsychological evaluation is in a portable book, which clinicians can carry at the front line. On the other hand, perhaps the book tries to target too wide an audience, as the preface states that it