

Book Reviews

NEUROPATHOLOGY OF AIDS. 1990. Edited by Harry V. Vinters and Karl H. Anders. Published by CRC Press, Inc. 229 pages.

This book, written by two neuropathologists from Los Angeles, is based on their rather extensive experience with both biopsy and autopsy material from HIV- infected individuals.

The lesions thought to be due to the virus itself, those due to other infectious agents, and various miscellaneous findings of uncertain or unknown significance are dealt with.

The gross and microscopic descriptions are quite complete, and the book is profusely illustrated with photographs of generally excellent quality.

There is a very brief description of the biology of the virus and the mechanisms of tissue damage. There is also information on the techniques of handling infected tissues in a safe manner.

As a compendium of gross and microscopic features found in these cases, the book may be of value to pathologists. On the other hand, equally good descriptions of the various complicating infections and neoplastic conditions are readily available in other texts, and in this sense, much of the book is redundant; the most useful section will be the portions dealing with lesions due to the virus itself. The paucity of clinical information, and the absence of descriptions of findings in the body outside of the nervous system, will restrict the usefulness of this book to individuals interested in these aspects.

An irritating aspect of the book is in the manner the photographs are numbered and labelled; the legends appearing on one page may refer to photographs on the next two or three pages, making it necessary to flip back and forth between the legends and photographs. This could easily have been prevented by a more conventional editorial layout.

In summary, the book provides an excellent compendium of the gross and microscopic features in the nervous system of AIDS and its complications, and will be of interest to pathologists dealing with this material.

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ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: TREATMENT AND LONG TERM MANAGEMENT. 1990. Edited by Jeffery L. Cummings and Bruce L. Miller. Published by Marcel Dekker Inc. 390 pages. \$138 Cdn. approx.

This is volume 4 in a series entitled Neurological Disease and Therapy. The 25 chapters provide an overview of Dementia of Alzheimer's Type (D.A.T.). Clinical criteria including the current criteria for DSM III R and NINCDS-ADRDA for the diagnosis of definite and probable AD are noted.

Five chapters are devoted to the multiple neurotransmitter systems affected in DAT. Their association with cognitive and behavioural symptoms, however, remain unestablished. Therapeutic attempts based on transmitter failure are outlined and summarized. However, treatment has been universally unsuccessful. The numerous behavioural symptoms are discussed, as well as various forms of therapy and their side effects.

Long term therapy including family directed therapy and the emotional support required by the care givers are dealt with in depth.

Perhaps more discussion of the ethics of treatment is needed. This volume is well written and should be of value to practicing neurologists and those dealing with DAT.

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INTRACRANIAL ANEURYSM SURGERY-TECHNIQUES. 1990. Edited by Duke S. Samson and H. Hunt Batjer. Published by Futura Publishing Co. 239 pages. \$63 Cdn. approx.

There has been a plethora of aneurysm books in the past few years. This volume is a useful addition. It joins the books of Ito, Sugita, and that Ojemann and Crowell in being primarily a "How-to-do-it", technical manual. This monograph was written specifically to facilitate aneurysm operations for the practicing surgeon. Its focus, while deliberately narrow, has been clearly delineated and successfully achieved. The authors are both superb technical aneurysm surgeons and their thoughts on the selection and use of aneurysm clips, the principals of dissection, the treatment of intraoperative rupture and the use of temporary arterial occlusion are well reasoned and eminently practical. There are 16 chapters in this 239 page book. For the most part, aneurysms are grouped by their anatomical location. For each location the authors give their personal preferences for positioning, skin-bone exposure, initial exposure, dissection, clip application and "final thoughts". The illustrations are all black and white line drawings and are workman-like and clear. For the most part they are presented to give the "Surgeon's eye view".

This would be a very useful book for the beginning resident to purchase and even the experienced surgeon will gain a few "pearls" from the thoughts of these skilled neurosurgeons. Overall this is a lucid, thoughtful and easy to read book which is excellent value for the money.

*Bryce Weir,
Edmonton, Alberta*

STEROIDS IN DISEASES OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. 1989. Edited by Rudy Capildeo. Published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 306 pages. \$78 Cdn. approx.

This text on the use of steroids in CNS disease is divided into six sections dealing with basic principles, tumors, trauma, pain, multiple sclerosis and other neurological disease. The basic science section is well done although other comments on biochemistry, side-effects and comparisons of the various steroid preparations would have been helpful. In the second and third sections on tumors and trauma, a large number of chapters are devoted to these topics. Often however, there is a jarring juxtaposition of a narrowly focused basic research chapter with empirical clinical data in the next chapter which does not lend continuity to the section. Much of the information presented is repeated in different chapters with the same studies cited but reaching different conclusions. There are two well written chapters in the trauma section that critique the literature and note no benefit of steroids. The other chapters suggest the doses of steroids used may not have been high enough, which in light of a recent publication (New England Journal Medicine 1990) may have been prescient.