

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.

*Andrew Kertesz
London, Ontario*

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.

*Adrian J. Priesol
Toronto, Ontario*

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

is hoped that the book will be useful to a diverse group of readers, ranging from medical students to nurses to neuropathologists and radiologists. One of the strengths of this book is that it will indeed help medical students and residents with differential diagnosis, given the large amounts of material in this book. It will almost certainly also be useful for nurses, journalists and general readers who wish a broad overview without the need to read a more detailed textbook. However, residents who desire a portable book, which will help them with practical patient management, may be disappointed.

W.J. Becker
Calgary, Alberta

WOLFF'S HEADACHE AND OTHER HEAD PAIN. Seventh edition. 2001. Edited by SD Silberstein, RB Lipton and DJ Dalessio. Published by Oxford University Press. 625 pages C \$158.50

This is the seventh edition of this remarkable book that originally appeared as a 773 page monograph entirely written by Dr. Harold Wolff a half century ago. The present 625 page text is authored by some 44 authorities in the headache field. The senior editor, Dr. Don Dalessio, who has participated in all but the first edition, begins this edition with a suitable biographical tribute to Dr. Wolff. Wolff was one of the first people to apply scientific method to the study of headache and much of his writing detailed the experiments that led to his conclusion that vascular changes were responsible for much of the symptomatology of migraine. Paradoxically, Wolff also emphasized the psychophysiologic factors that still label migraine as a neuroticism in the eyes of many practitioners and lay persons.

While the first edition described the many experiments that Wolff himself carried out, this book is filled with the results of clinical and basic research developments from around the world. Newer concepts of migraine and other headaches arising from electrophysiologic, neuropharmacologic and genetic research and consequent treatments are reported that even Wolff could not have anticipated. The emphasis, however, is still mainly clinical and this book remains an excellent reference for anyone treating patients with headache.

Like most multi-author texts, there is considerable variation in quality among the chapters. However, overall, the quality is high and the references amazingly current. While very broad in coverage, there are some important clinical areas that seem to be neglected or discussed too briefly. At a time when there is much interest in the particular problems faced by women with headache, it is regrettable that there are only three pages devoted to menstrual and menopausal migraine and recommendations for management are barely touched on. This is partly balanced by a fairly long chapter on Headaches in Children and Adolescents. Chapters that are especially well-written are those on the Pathophysiology of Headache, on the still controversial Cervicogenic Headache and on Cluster Headache, which is the most complete review of this particularly distressing headache I have seen outside a monograph. An interesting final chapter on Communicating with the Patient wraps up the book on a practical note.

Wolff's Headache and Other Head Pain is probably the most useful comprehensive text on the subject of headache and forms a niche between the smaller, delightfully readable Lance's *Mechanism and Management of Headache* and the encyclopedic Olesen, Tfelt-Hansen and Welch's *The Headaches*. Wolff's book has been the headache standard for half a century and is recommended as a

reference for neurology and medical resident's and for practising physicians. Headache specialists will already have it on their bookshelves.

Robert F Nelson
Ottawa, Ontario.

LOCALIZATION IN CLINICAL NEUROLOGY, Fourth Edition. 2001. By P.W. Brazis, J.C. Masdeu, J. Biller. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 608 pages. C\$212.70 approx.

Despite major advances in neuroimaging, clinical neurophysiology and diagnostic genetic testing, neurology remains, and will continue to be, a specialty which relies first and foremost on history and physical examination. Residents are taught to "localize first and then think about etiology". The book "Localization in Clinical Neurology" by Brazis, Masdeu and Biller, now in its fourth edition, has become the standard text for learning applied neuro-anatomy and clarifying the significance of signs and syndromes – both common and obscure. The appearance of this edition has been significantly improved with a more readable font, and two columns per page (allowing the addition of substantially more material without extra pages). There are welcome additions of numerous new figures and up to-date references. Recent knowledge, particularly from advances in neuroimaging, have been incorporated. It may be useful in a future addition to integrate some neuroimaging and clinical neurophysiology figures. The first chapter on general principals of localization is new and has a good but disproportionately long section on gait disorders (an interest of one of the authors). The chapters proceed from peripheral to central, terminating with cerebrovascular syndromes and finally coma.

The book is more than comprehensive – almost encyclopedic. At times this makes for very dense reading and a tendency to lose the forest for the trees. For example: in the table of etiologies for bilateral facial nerve palsies, there are 11 major categories and 54 conditions listed, including encephalitis, Poland's anomaly, Stevens-Johnson syndrome and Tangier's disease! An inexperienced clinician might not realize that, practically speaking, there are only a handful of conditions such as sarcoidosis, Lyme disease, Guillain-Barré and Sjogren's, that figure prominently in isolated bilateral seventh nerve palsies. Despite the depth of information, some important localizing pearls such as the strong association of facial contracture and pontine glioma are lacking. There is a curious omission of a full sensory dermatomal chart. There seems to be uncritical acceptance of the controversial interictal personality disturbances which some authors have associated with temporal lobe epilepsy.

However, these minor criticisms aside, where else can one learn that "cocosmia" means "experiencing unpleasant odors", or that "crying or sobbing seizures may alternate with gelastic spells in the same patient" or that "prosopognosia may be associated with agnosia for noncanonical views" (ability to identify eye glasses with frames unfolded but not folded)? This superb reference is the Haymaker of our day and every trainee in neurology or neurosurgery, as well as every neurologist, should have access to it, if not own it. The authors are to be congratulated for updating and improving what was already an exceptional book.

Alan Guberman
Ottawa, Ontario