

NEUROTRAUMA: TREATMENT, REHABILITATION AND RELATED ISSUES. First edition. Edited by Michael E. Miner and Karen A. Wagner. Published by Butterworths. 257 pages. Cdn. \$49.00 approx.

This compact volume contains the material presented at the First Houston Conference on Neurotrauma, held in Houston, Texas in 1984. It is anticipated that these conferences will be held annually, and the proceedings published in a similar manner each year.

This first volume contains 3 major sections, with 17 chapters, written by 28 contributors. The aim of the Conference and this book is to present the entire spectrum of current head injury management, from acute medical management, through to re-integration into society.

While there is some variability in the quality and originality of the material presented in the different chapters, the goal of presenting a current overview of head injury management is achieved, and several worthwhile directions and innovations are described.

The first section contains some useful suggestions about monitoring and treating hypertension, hypoxia, and other metabolic aberrations in the acute setting.

The second major section, devoted to issues in monitoring of evoked responses, enumerates several enthusiastic trials of this newer technology, but fails to convince this reader of the benefit to be achieved in patient management.

The final section includes several chapters on rehabilitation. A healthy skepticism and an approach to the scientific assessment of efficacy of rehabilitative measures is presented. This seems a real contribution, and rounds out the comprehensive overview that the authors are trying to achieve.

I think this book will be of interest to those treating serious head injuries, including neurosurgeons and intensivists. The final section will also be of interest to those involved in rehabilitation and social work. The volume would be a useful edition to the hospital library of institutions with major neurosurgical or trauma care units.

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PROGRESS IN NEUROPATHOLOGY. Volume 6. Edited by Harry M. Zimmerman. Published by Raven Press. 282 pages. Cdn. \$122.00 approx.

This book costs too much money. It has only 282 pages and is 1.7 cm thick, including the hard covers. This reviewer paid \$92.41 (U.S.) for his own copy only a few days before the review copy was made available to him. For the previous issue, Volume 5, published in 1983, which had 342 pages, he paid \$59.00 (U.S.). Departmental and hospital library budgets are shrinking and it will soon be no longer possible for them to justify the purchase of such "luxuries". It also seems likely

that the core of compulsive individual purchasers who have in the past bought these things will be eroded as the sacrifices necessary to own these books will cease to be understood by wives and other family members with conflicting financial needs and desires.

Having got that off his chest, the reviewer admits that he enjoyed this book, although perhaps not as much as some of the previous volumes in the series.

There are fourteen wide-ranging chapters, many of which are excellent and informative "state of the art" reviews, though there are some papers which might be better suited for publication in journals and there are even occasional chapters which provoke some wonder as to why they're included in this sort of publication at all.

My personal favorites are Hirano and Llenas' chapter on the comparative features of Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, and Guamanian Parkinsonism Dementia Complex, Goebel's up-to-date review of congenital myopathies, a beautiful review of cytoskeletal abnormalities in neuropathology by Yen, Dickson, Peterson and Goldman, a chapter on mechanisms of tumour invasion and metastases in the nervous system by Katz and Liotta, and a thought-provoking chapter on the role of glucocorticoids in the production of, and in response to, hippocampal pathology in a variety of situations by Sapolsky, Krey and McEwen.

In addition to those, there are a number of other chapters dealing with various aspects of neoplasia including the role of cytoplasmic microtubules in regulation of cell proliferation, characterization of BCNU resistant cells in glioma cell culture, virus induced brain tumours, tissue culture of human and experimental gliomas, and a chapter on the ontogeny of gliomas. A useful chapter discusses the specificity or lack of same of neuron specific enolase as a diagnostic marker. A chapter is devoted to a discussion of neuroendocrine models of brain transplantation and another characterizes the inflammatory infiltrate in experimental allergic encephalomyelitis and in some human demyelinating diseases. There is also a short chapter outlining some of the skeletal muscle abnormalities in patients with fatal catatonia.

While it is fashionable to state, and is probably true, that most of the material contained in this sort of volume can be found elsewhere in the literature, comprehensive reviews such as these are useful and frequently entertaining, and provide ready access to information for those of us not specifically interested in the topics under review and therefore unlikely to pursue detailed searches of the journal literature. It would be a shame if they cease to exist because their high cost exceeds the means of prospective purchasers.

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