

There is also a large section dealing with epilepsy in children that should help parents let their child lead a fuller life without being overprotective.

Dr. Devinsky has given both people with epilepsy and their families an excellent guide to refer to, especially when epilepsy is first diagnosed. It also gives them abundant information to help them lead an independent and productive life.

*Greg and Karen Pollock
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FACTS AND RESEARCH IN GERONTOLOGY. Volume 7. 1993. Edited by B. Vellas, J.L. Albarede and P.J. Garry. Published by Springer Publishing Company (New York). 333 pages. \$C58.00.

Unfortunately I must make a strong recommendation not to buy this book. According to the publishers, this book claims to be an authoritative, international reference volume which covers a wide variety of important topics. If this is its true purpose, I believe it fails.

A foreword is not written by the editors. As such, we can only speculate as to the proposed target audience and objectives of the book. As there are 132 listed contributors, it is clearly critical that the editors have a very clear conception of the plan for the book which would then be implemented in a vigorous manner. There is no evidence that either of these two conditions were adhered to. The production values of the book are dreadful. Some chapters which were translated are virtually uninterpretable in English. There are copious typographical errors throughout the book which detract from its readability. Even when translated chapters are readable, they clearly suffer from the lack of a careful review. For example, Dr. Schroll in his chapter titled "Geriatric Research and its Perspectives" tries to marshal support for a concept he calls "Offensive Geriatrics". Reading the chapter makes it quite clear what he is talking about but the term itself does not convey the meaning he wishes.

The book is divided into six sections. Each section has a number of chapters which are either a review, an abstract, or of original research. How authors and topics are selected is unknown. Within certain sections, a good deal of repetition exists – for example in the second section titled "Facts and Research on Cardiovascular Function in the Elderly".

Some of the chapters were, I felt, good reviews. I enjoyed the chapter titled "Functional Status Assessment of Older Persons" in particular. Notwithstanding these breaks in the sky, I found the volume confused and a severe disappointment.

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BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BRAIN FUNCTION AND DISEASE. 1993. Edited by A. Frazer, P.B. Moninoff and A. Winokur. Published by Raven Press. 479 pages. \$C51.00.

The intention of this volume is "to encourage insight into the crucial interplay between intensive laboratory investigation and the application of new discoveries to the treatment of neuropsychiatric disease". This book is edited and written mainly by psychiatrists and neuropsychopharmacologists for a psychiatrically-oriented audience. The 23 chapter titles reflect this slant with an emphasis on synaptic transmission, psychopharmacology and psychiatric disorders. There are chapters covering topics as diverse as molecular genetic techniques, neuroendocrinology, sleep and biological

rhythms, learning and memory, brain-behaviour relationships, obesity and substance abuse. The breadth of the book is quite remarkable but subjects seem to have been carefully selected and are organized into logical sections.

The book is visually appealing with a number of helpful figures and tables. Each chapter begins with a brief outline and list of key concepts. The references are not abundant but well chosen and represent an appropriate mix of current and classic titles. This book amply fulfills its purpose of offering a concise and current survey of major issues and research directions in biological psychiatry. The editors are to be commended for providing a very useful and readable text covering areas in basic neuropsychobiology which are rapidly expanding.

This book provides excellent up-to-date background reading for biological psychiatry, neuropsychiatry and to a lesser degree behavioural neurology. It will even have some appeal, especially for the excellent chapters on neurotransmitters and epilepsy, for neurologists and neurology trainees.

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THE NEUROBEHAVIOURAL TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY. 1993. Edited by David I. Mostofsky and Yngve Loyning. Published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. Publishers. 350 pages. \$C52.00.

As someone who regularly treats epilepsy, I am familiar with the behavioural, emotional and cognitive problems which often accompany seizures. Thus, I was interested in reading this multi-authored volume, the purpose of which is to "provide a state-of-the-art guide to methods and techniques used in the behavioural treatment of epilepsy, and to their basis in theory". An unusual feature of the book is to provide only the authors names and the institution where they work without reference to their discipline (neurology, physiology, psychology, nursing and epidemiology all appear to be represented) or even their title (MD, PhD, RN, etc.). Such generic authorship should serve to draw attention to what is written rather than to who is doing the writing, a laudable goal. This is particularly so in this book, wherein the 13 chapters range from the superb to the bizarre. As expected, behavioural modification, psychotherapy and biofeedback as treatments of epilepsy are addressed to varying degrees. Chapter 13 succinctly titled "Methodology" by Sechrest and Maller, is a must read for anyone engaged in clinical research. The description of the principles and problems of clinical research methodology is worth the price of the book. Dodrill and Batzel provide a reasoned assessment of psychosocial function in epilepsy as measured by the Washington Psychosocial Inventory (WPSI). A chapter on "Catamenial Epilepsy" by Schechter gives a very good review of the clinical, endocrinological and physiological aspects of this disorder, but I am not sure what it is doing in a text on the neurobehavioural treatment of epilepsy. Maybe the author was a friend of the editor. On the other end of the spectrum, there are chapters describing dietary manipulation of lipids to enhance learning, the control of seizures by "self-regulation of alveolar PCO₂" and the treatment of epilepsy by exposure to magnetic fields! One tries to keep an open mind but some of these topics would at best be categorized as fringe medicine and serve only to detract from the more legitimate aspects of the volume. Because it reflects the range of activities in the field, this is an honest attempt to address an aspect of epilepsy management which has been relatively neglected by