

Book Reviews

PAIN IN CHILDREN. NATURE, ASSESSMENT, AND TREATMENT. 1990. By Patricia A. McGrath. Published by the Guilford Press. 466 pages. \$53 Cdn. approx.

"What is pain?" is a difficult question to address. An even more problematic question is: "What is pain to a child?" This new volume by Patricia McGrath outlines a balanced and authoritative approach to pain in infants and children. The book is written in an informal narrative and is easy to read. Beginning with descriptions of nociception through the eyes of children of different ages, the author goes on to describe validated pain assessment tools for infants and children, and to explore the difficulties encountered in attempting to quantitate subjective sensation.

A chapter on nociceptive neurophysiology includes several interesting historical vignettes ranging from The Book of Job to Descartes and Darwin.

There are several chapters summarizing treatment of pain in children. The author indicates that children are undertreated for pain compared to adults and sets about to rectify the situation. Pharmacological treatments of pain, including sound guidelines for analgesic administration, are reviewed. A chapter on non-pharmacologic methods of pain management describes behavioral and cognitive techniques, and other interventions. The author clearly draws from a wealth of personal experience, and is a strong advocate of a multi-disciplinary approach to pain management. Three chapters describing specific pain syndromes in children are replete with interesting anecdotal stories and clinical pearls.

A fifty page appendix includes several pain assessment tools used by the author, appropriate for children of various ages. A reference list at the end of the book provides an extensive compilation of published literature in this field.

The book is not a concise and comprehensive reference text; rather it is a readable review of a complex field of medicine. I highly recommend the book for both physicians and non physician caregivers of children, especially health care providers involved in pediatric oncology and surgery.

*Neil A. Hagen
Calgary, Alberta*

ATLAS OF ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPHY. By A. Guberman and M. Couture. Published by Little, Brown and Company, 220 pages. \$171 Cdn. approx.

By aiming apparently at student electroencephalographers and EEG technologists, this atlas provides common examples of normal and abnormal EEG patterns which one would encounter in a primarily adult practise.

The atlas constitutes a supplement to other standard texts and articles in each area of EEG. All but a very few of the well chosen illustrations are clearly printed and annotated. The authors indicate principal features and reasons for referral of the patient to the laboratory. Specific abnormalities in many of the illustrations are indicated. The unnecessary head diagram appears

inevitably in several of the illustrations, a feature which the authors could not have avoided.

Comments under each figure about several aspects of each illustration would have enhanced their teaching value. Certain phenomena, taken for granted by experienced electroencephalographers, may puzzle the beginning student.

A valuable feature is the sequential nature of many of the illustrations, particularly those which illustrate the sequential changes during recorded seizures.

This atlas has set limited goals for teaching fundamental EEG as indicated above. It achieves such goals very well. Its applicability would have been broadened by further text supplementation and perhaps this would appear in future editions.

*Warren T. Blume
London, Ontario*

GREAT MEN WITH SICK BRAINS & OTHER ESSAYS. 1990. By Bengt Ljunggren, MD, PhD. Published by American Association of Neurological Surgeons. 130 pages. \$40 Cdn. approx.

Many neurosurgeons have followed with delight the series of historical vignettes from the pen of Bengt Ljunggren. Thankfully these have now been assembled and published in a single volume by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. The author brought to the task an impish sense of humor, a profound neurosurgical knowledge and an unapologetic Scandinavian perspective. Even the avid reader of modern history and surgery is bound to be informed by the new and intriguing anecdotes regarding the lives of famous men such as General Leonard Wood, Alfred Nobel, Joseph Stalin, Sven Hedin, George Gershwin and Sir Dudley Pound. They will also learn more of such great scientists and surgeons as Vilhelm Magnus, Axel Key, Vladimir Bekhterev and Harvey Cushing. I discovered with interest that the first Professor of Neurosurgery was probably Ludvig Puusepp, appointed in 1910, in Russia! This is a charming monograph. I am sure there are many who hope that Ljunggren will exploit his obvious talent in this area and continue to enchant and enlighten us with further historical essays.

*Bryce Weir
Edmonton, Alberta*

NEUROLOGY OF PREGNANCY. 1989. By James O. Donaldson. Published by W.B. Saunders Company. 347 pages. \$116.50 Cdn. approx.

This monograph is almost unique in the neurological literature. The second edition of a work which initially appeared in 1978, Donaldson's book is virtually the only full text on neuro-obstetrics available. The new edition represents an extensive revision and expansion of many of the topics covered in the earlier book.

The book text consists of a series of brief well organized chapters, beginning with the neuro-anatomy of female reproductive

organs, proceeding on with discussions of neuropathy, muscle disease, tumors, headaches, epilepsy, eclampsia, peripartum convulsions, and concluding with the psychiatric aspects of pregnancy. In general, the author opens with a concise pithy summary of the disease under review followed by an examination of the impact of pregnancy on the disorder and the disorder on pregnancy. Illustrations are clear and frequent. References are listed at the end of each chapter together with a selected bibliography. The index is logical and detailed. Frequently, the disorder is described through reference to the original published case history which adds greatly to the richness of the work.

The particular strength of this work lies in its collection together of the many disparate pieces of information related to this topic between the covers of one relatively short book.

Although all the chapters are graced by the author's concise thorough and perceptive writing style, the reviews of epilepsy, eclampsia, and cerebrovascular disease are particularly useful. Donaldson does not hesitate to take a stand in controversial areas such as the use of anticonvulsants during pregnancy or the use of magnesium sulphate in the treatment of eclampsia, but is careful to indicate that his views are not necessarily dogma.

In what amounts to a brief focussed text book of neurology, there are bound to be omissions or areas of emphasis that the reader may take issue with. The chapter on infections covers disorders ranging from kuru to lyme disease, but makes no mention of AIDS. The chapter on neuropathy does not refer to the possibility of epidural anesthesia induced radiculopathy. Moreover, the terms axonotmesis and neurotmesis are used interchangeably on page 48. The definition of "complicated migraine" on page 222, "classic migraine in which the arteriospasm affects the middle cerebral artery or basilar artery" is atypical to say the least. Moreover, if for no other reason than lack of space, much is written here without referenced attribution.

Nonetheless, the author has produced, again, a readily accessible and relatively inexpensive work which will undoubtedly remain the most important reference on this subject for some time to come. This is an invaluable reference work strongly recommended for all practicing adult neurologists and neurosurgeons.

*P. O'Connor
Toronto, Ontario*

MRI ATLAS OF THE BRAIN. By William G. Bradley and Graeme Bydder. Published by Martin Dunitz Ltd. (U.K.) North American Distributors — Raven Press. 363 pages. \$147.50 Cdn. approx.

"Atlas: A collection of illustrations on one subject" (Dorlands Illustrated Medical Dictionary). By this definition, this text is something more than an atlas. Each chapter begins with a brief textual introduction to a broad topic in magnetic resonance imaging, followed by a collection of images covering some of the commoner disorders encountered in brain imaging.

Both authors are prominent radiologists with many publications in the field of MRI and both are past presidents of the Society of Magnetic Resonance in Medicine. In the preface, they state that the text is designed for radiologists "participating

in MRI less than once a week". Presumably, it should then also be a suitable primer for neurosciences physicians in clinical practice. It is thus not intended to provide exhaustive coverage.

The text begins with a brief but fairly complete discussion of essentials of MRI physics, including the basics of creation of the MR signal, image production and artifacts. The next chapter is a very short and sketchy coverage of "new techniques" which is needlessly complex in some respects, while omitting some important details regarding the physics and application of new fast scanning techniques. Also, the nature of the most commonly used sequence, the spin echo, is only very superficially covered.

The third chapter discusses flow phenomena, an important topic well-covered by Dr. Bradley. Although he has used this material with slight modifications in several publications, it is worthwhile to read through it again.

The remaining seven chapters deal with major disease groups, including tumors, vascular disease and hemorrhage, demyelinating disease, infection, hydrocephalus, and pediatric brain disorders, with a chapter on MR contrast agents. Again, the text is sparse (under ten pages in all chapters) and sometimes almost nonexistent. For example, infections, multiple sclerosis and all other disorders of myelination are covered together in five pages. The images are primarily in the axial plane, familiar to clinicians and radiologists accustomed to CT images. They are of reasonable (not outstanding) quality overall, and cover the commonest neurological diseases fairly well. There are many blank spaces between images.

The number of MR textbooks on the market is rapidly increasing, and there are now many choices available, of varying length and complexity. This text might be suitable as a basic primer for a physician wishing to acquire a superficial understanding of MR imaging, but it is rather expensive considering its sketchiness, and better basic texts are available.

*Carla Wallace
Calgary, Alberta*

HANDBOOK OF NEUROLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN CHILDREN. 1989. 1st Edition. By J.B.P. Stephenson and M.D. King. Published by Butterworths. 244 pages. \$82 Cdn. approx.

The "Handbook of Neurological Investigations in Children" takes on the difficult task of describing diagnostic approaches to a myriad of paediatric neurological conditions. The book is divided into two sections; the first provides a description of specific tests including their uses, abuses and contraindications and the second presents a problem-oriented approach to a variety of conditions, concentrating upon neurodegenerative disorders. The Handbook is not meant to be a clinical compendium, but rather a guideline to the laboratory investigation of children with neurological disorders. Most chapters contain useful tables which summarize the organization of test and their application to the clinical presentation. The reproduction of the CT and MRI images is poor in some instances (e.g., Fig. 3.2, 7.3), especially for a book priced at \$82 Canadian.

It is easy to nitpick over such a book, as there is no one way to tackle a problem. However, a few specific comments are warranted. Chapter 1 may have indicated the common pitfalls of