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
Calgary, Alberta

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 marshall 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.

David B. Hogan
Calgary, Alberta

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.

Alan Guberman
Ottawa, Ontario

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 an 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 PCO_2" 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

physicians. I give this book three out of five stars despite its flaws and recommend it to neurologists and others involved in the treatment of epilepsy.

Richard S. McLachlan
London, Ontario

SLEEP DISORDERS AND INSOMNIA IN THE ELDERLY, Volume 7 (supplement). 1993. Edited by J.E. Morley and T. Roth (Series Editors: B. Vellas and J.L. Albarede). Published by Springer Publishing Company. 232 pages. $C52.00.

This volume, according the to publishers, "addresses the latest findings about sleep disorders in the elderly". From the preface, I understand that the contents of this volume derives from a workshop held in 1992 on the topic of *Sleep Disorders in the Elderly*. Thirty-eight contributors are listed. They are from Western Europe and North America. The book is divided into 21 short chapters. There is no bibliography.

I believe this volume is modestly successful in its stated aim. The chapters are individually well written. The contents of the book do cover a good deal of the relevant sub-topics which fall under the theme of the book, Sleep Disorders in the Elderly.

There are a number of deficiencies in the book. There is a good deal of duplication between the chapters. The chapters could be organized on a more rational basis so there would be a better flow to the book. Later chapters return to topics previously covered. Because of the shortness of the chapters, topics are not dealt with in detail. A higher degree of specificity would improve the utility of this book for expert readers. For example, the book would have benefitted from more detailed discussion on sundowning, nocturnal agitation, periodic limb movement disorder and on assessment issues such as who should undergo a detailed sleep study. A number of typographical errors are present in the book but they are not excessive. There are a number of factual errors present but again they are not excessive – for example, on page 148 it states that total body water increases with increases in age, in fact it decreases.

I found information in the book that I was not aware of. This new knowledge will change my clinical practice. As such, time spent reading the book could not be viewed as a waste. That achievement is no small feat.

David B. Hogan
Calgary, Alberta

MANUAL OF NERVE CONDUCTION VELOCITY AND CLINICAL NEUROPHYSIOLOGY. 3rd Edition. 1994. By J. DeLisa, H.J. Lee, E.M. Baran, K.-S. Lai and N. Spielholz. Published by Raven Press. 494 pages. $C62.00.

This is the third edition of a text which is a collection of routine and unusual peripheral and central nerve conduction techniques. Chapters from the previous edition (1987) were updated. Five chapters have been added: Intraoperative Monitoring Using Somatosensory Evoked Potentials, Auditory and Visual Evoked Potentials, Magnetoelectric Stimulation, Motor Unit Action Potential Analysis, Single Fiber Electromyography and Anatomy. Each technique is described in the same sequence: Pickup (Input Terminal 1), Reference (Input Terminal 2), Ground, Stimulation and Settings. Comments on potential pitfalls frequently follow. Normal values from the original articles are reproduced. Conveniently, diagrams and tables are widely used. Occasionally, several techniques are reported for one particular study. The reader may experiment and decide on the technique he/she prefers. References are always available for details.

For the experienced electromyographer, this text is particularly useful for reminders on electrode positioning when performing unusual nerve conduction studies. In this regard, comments on potential pitfalls could advantageously shift away from the emphasis on temperature measurements to more practical considerations. For example, when performing phrenic nerve conductions, how is the diaphragmatic potential differentiated from a volume conducted response originating from adjacent chest wall muscles? A note of caution should be added concerning normative data for motor unit duration using concentric needles in the section on Motor Unit Action Potential Analysis: the definition of normal as deviations less than 20% from the mean for all muscle groups appears arbitrary and is unlikely to rest on sound statistical analysis.

Nevertheless, this text is very practical and is highly recommended as a reference volume in all EMG laboratories.

François Grand'Maison
Sherbrooke, Québec

EPILEPSY AND QUALITY OF LIFE. 1994. Edited by Michael Trimble and Edwin Dodson. Published by Raven Press. 320 pages. $C137.00.

Assessing the quality of life (QOL) in seizure disorder patients has become a prominent area of interest in epilepsy for clinicians, researchers as well as pharmaceutical companies. This book is a result of an international meeting sponsored by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and it has many strengths. It includes: chapters that address QOL from the perspective of not only the patient, but also family members and volunteer groups; cognitive function and QOL; utilizing QOL measures in drug studies; QOL after epilepsy surgery; and issues concerning QOL in children with epilepsy. The book reviews existing instruments being used in North America and the United Kingdom and thus is unlike any other book currently available on this topic.

Historically, a considerable amount of work on quality of life in epilepsy was pioneered by Carl Dodrill and it was therefore pleasing to see his chapter summarizing the many studies that have utilized the Washington Psychosocial Inventory (WPSI) as well as some commentary addressing criticism of this particular tool. It was interesting to read about a methodology known as the repertory grid technique as an alternate way of assessing QOL. However, one wonders about the utility of the technique that relies heavily on verbal constructs for patients with seizures from their dominant hemisphere who have language deficits. An excellent feature of this book is that samples of the various existing tools are presented in the appendices (i.e., The Liverpool Quality of Life Questionnaire, ESI-55, WPSI, the Adolescent Psychosocial Seizure Inventory). Although the heavily promoted QOLIE-89 is not a part of this book, it was adapted in part on the Epilepsy Surgery Inventory – 55 (ESI-55) discussed in Chapter 9. The questions from the ESI-55 are similar in format and the reader can obtain a sense of what the QOLIE-89 is like by looking at the ESI-55. There is some unevenness in the quality of the chapters, but the reading list and bibliographies are comprehensive and would allow the reader to quickly locate original articles.

There is little discussion of some very real practical issues regarding QOL instruments, such as the minimum required reading levels for the various measures, the manpower required to administer, score, and interpret the inventory, and the clinical uses of the information gathered from a QOL inventory for an individual case.