The author of this book is a neurologist, neurosurgeon and also a medical advisor to the pharmaceutical industry. The first chapter succinctly reviews some very important concepts relating to the definition and epidemiology of Adverse Drug Reactions. The second chapter deals with the pathophysiology and risk factors for such reactions. In the next 23 chapters, drug induced neurological disorders are presented mainly according to clinical semiology: encephalopathy, seizures, neuropathy, myopathy, sleep disorders, etc. This approach is useful in the clinic where patients' symptoms often prompt physicians to explore the possibility of drug toxicity. For most potentially offending drugs, a paragraph lists references, key manifestations and prognosis. In many cases, suspected pathogonetic mechanisms are usefully discussed.

Dr. Jain has included an exhaustive list of references – in all about 3000 citations. Much of these are brief case studies, with the inherent biases and uncertainty that this information carries. For example, under the rubric "drug-induced Guillain-Barré Syndrome" steroids (or steroid withdrawal) are listed, as well as fansidar (based on a single case report). The author does try to point out in most cases whether the evidence is purely circumstantial, whether such reports are isolated occurrences, and whether there may be a rationale for the association. As expected, a book which serves as a repertoire of information which is rapidly accruing can never be quite up to date. Vigabatrin, for example, does not appear under the rubric "drug-induced retinopathy".

This book will serve as a useful quick reference for those who do not have ready access to electronic databases or a full complement of recent specialized monographs on specific areas of neurological disease. It is a very useful reference in a field of clinical neurology which is becoming increasingly relevant. One expects, however, that in the future this type of documentation will be best presented in a frequently updated electronic format.

Pierre R. Bourque
Ottawa, Ontario

SYRINGOMYELIA AND THE CHIARI MALFORMATIONS. 1997. Edited by John A. Anson, Edward C. Benzel, Issam A. Awad. Published by The American Association of Neurological Surgeons. 193 pages. $C124.00

This excellent publication is appropriately dedicated to Dr. Bernard Williams who has written extensively and contributed greatly to the understanding of Chiari Malformation, hindbrain herniation and syringomyelia. The book is divided into fifteen chapters, each with a large reference list. The majority of the contributors are neurosurgeons, and two are neuroradiologists.

Chapter One deals in depth with the history of the CNS anomaly. Many familiar and lesser known contributors are mentioned. Congenital, acquired and hydrodynamic theories are discussed, illustrated and we are brought up to date with the latest thinking on the pathogenesis of syringomyelia. This chapter also gives a review of available treatments, namely radiation and surgery.

Chapter Two proposes a classification of syringomyelia and Chiari Malformations. This is presented in a clear and comprehensive way. Chapter Three discusses the pathogenesis and developmental theories of hindbrain herniation, and the associated bony and soft tissues anomalies at the craniovertebral junction, with some clarification of the mechanism of extension and expansion of syringomyelia cavities.

In Chapter Four, neuroimaging of syringomyelia and Chiari Malformations is presented with excellent tips regarding the measurements of tonsilar position for Chiari I and II malformations. Dynamic pre- and post-operative imaging is discussed. Broad review of the Chiari I and II malformations is given in Chapters Five and Six, where one find, excellent reviews on the pathogenesis of associated CNS anomalies.

Chiari malformations III and IV are briefly but clearly defined in Chapter Seven. The relationship between Chiari malformations and syringomyelia is discussed in Chapter Eight. Two brief chapters (Nine and Ten) deals with post-traumatic and neoplastic syringomyelia. Chapter Eleven, written by Bernard Williams shortly before his death in 1995, underlines the basis of treatment of syringomyelia. Chapters Eleven, Twelve and Thirteen address the treatment of Chiari malformations and syringomyelia, with their associated complications. The final chapter summarizes the multifactorial nature of the pathological process underlying these disorders, provides food for thought for further basic and clinical research.

Despite some overlap in occasional chapters, this book is a must for any physician dealing with the complex Chiari-syringomyelia patient. It is long overdue.

Falah B. Maroun
St. John's, Newfoundland