

by an eminent Spanish child neurologist who has made many original past contributions to the world literature. The tomes are attractively produced using good quality paper and are profusely illustrated with 1,235 pictures, about 30 of which are in colour. Many original line drawings clarify difficult anatomic concepts. The author's expertise and interest in radiology, he having formerly published another text on pediatric neuroradiology, are evident in the many carefully selected radiographs. Patient photographs and EEG tracings also are generally quite illustrative. My only disappointment in the illustrations is that I would have preferred to see more histopathology. The text is well written and clear.

An encyclopedic treatise on as broad a subject as pediatric neurology necessitates that some disorders be discussed only briefly in one or two paragraphs, but the author compensates in most cases with extensive and up-to-date references for further reading. These citations, together with the carefully compiled indices, make the textbook exceptionally useful as a reference source. The author's experience with dysmorphic syndromes, cerebral malformations and problems of embryologic development make these sections particularly interesting and informative. The most recent revision of the international classification of the epilepsies is used. Sections on metabolic diseases and neuromuscular disorders are clinically oriented but current and inclusive.

While comparisons with the 2-volume textbook of Swaiman and Wright are inevitable, Pascual-Castroviejo has written quite a different book. It is gratifying to see the country that provided such exceptional early pioneers as Ramón y Cajal and de Río Hortega continue to make contributions in the neurosciences. I would highly recommend this textbook to any pediatrician or neurologist who reads Spanish, and look forward to possible future translations to French and English.

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BASIC MECHANISMS OF NEURONAL HYPEREXCITABILITY (Neurology and Neurobiology, Volume 2). Edited by Herbert H. Jasper and Nico M. van Gelder. Published by Alan R. Liss, Inc., New York. 495 pages. \$120.00.

Is epilepsy a result of decreased inhibition, increased excitation or an intrinsic membrane abnormality of neurons? Do dendrites move? Is there electrical transmission between neurons in the C.N.S.? Do glia regulate neuronal function? How does North American scorpion venom work and why is this relevant to neuron activity? What produces a P.D.S. (paroxysmal depolarization shift), the neuronal hallmark of the EEG spike?

What is a neuromodulator? How do phenobarbital and phenytoin work? What is Florey's Factor I?

If any of these questions interest you, you will find the answers (or at least the authors' biases) in this volume. Based on a symposium at Université de Montréal in 1982, the book, whose multi-authored chapters range from good to excellent, examines (according to the dust jacket) how changes in neuronal excitability are of "major significance" in the epilepsies as well as in "the development of mental and motor disorders". Those interested in epilepsy will find a wealth of relevant basic scientific information. However, only occasional and indirect reference is made to how the data presented relates to psychiatric illness or motor system disease.

About equal parts of physiology and biochemistry are mixed with smaller amounts of anatomy, endocrinology and pharmacology to produce a balanced overview of neuronal hyperexcitability as seen from a basic neuroscientist's viewpoint. Control of membrane excitability is discussed with respect to four main areas: cellular microcircuitry (cell interaction), ionic mechanisms (extracellular and intracellular ion concentrations, membrane ion channels), neurotransmitters (including neuromodulators) and energy metabolism. Particularly noteworthy to anyone interested in the basic mechanisms of epilepsy and its treatment are the chapters by David Prince on ionic mechanisms in epileptogenesis and Robert Macdonald on the mechanisms of action of barbituates and hydantoins. Discussions recorded after the presentations at the Montreal meeting follow each chapter and these contain some of the most thought-provoking ideas in the book, a significant share provided by the senior editor, Dr. Jasper.

Dr. K.A.C. Elliott of Montreal, to whom this book is dedicated, was the first to determine that Florey's Factor I, an inhibitory substance in mammalian brain, was GABA.

The text is well edited with only the occasional spelling mistake, (e.g. protoxinin for picrotoxin, page 368). An annoyance is the use of two different qualities of paper throughout the volume, particularly when one considers the price.

Although there has been a proliferation of books from symposia of which several on epilepsy research have recently been or are about to be published, I would still recommend this volume to any clinical or basic neuroscientist who has an interest in epilepsy or who wishes to understand a little better how the brain works. However, unless you are independently wealthy or have a large expense account, you might want to ask your local library to purchase the book.

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Books Received

ASSESSMENT OF APHASIA AND RELATED DISORDERS, 2nd Edition. By Edith Kaplan and Harold Goodglass. Published by Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia. 102 pages. \$34.50 Cdn.

EXPERIMENTAL AND CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS IN AGING, 1983. Edited by Richard F. Walker and Ralph L. Cooper. Published by Marcell Dekker Inc. 448 pages. \$81.25 Cdn.

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEUROPSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY, 1984. By Robert S. Feldman and Linda F. Quenzer. Published by Sinauer Associates Inc., Massachusetts. 508 pages. \$43.75 Cdn.

GLUTAMINE, GLUTAMATE AND GABA IN THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM, 1983, Series: Neurology and Neurobiology. Edited by Leif Hertz, Elling Kvamme, Edith