

Nearly all textbooks of paediatric neurology in the Spanish language are translations of American, British or French works. This is the first multi-authored comprehensive text written primarily in Spanish by the editors and 47 additional contributing authors, all from Spain and Latin America. In this context it is unique and differs also from the single-author textbook of child neurology by Pascual-Castroviejo, published in 1983, because of the more diverse perspective inherent in multi-authored works.

The first chapter is a review of neurological physical diagnosis in children, disease categories and important laboratory investigations. It should provide a thorough introduction for paediatricians and residents in training. Chapter 2 by Campos Castello and Sfaello and colleagues is a particularly well written and systematic overview of this complex and all-encompassing topic, with enough details to be useful clinically in understanding pathogenesis and therapeutic approaches. Special consideration is afforded appropriately to the neurological complications of prematurity and also to neurosurgical conditions in the neonate. Other chapters address the topics of mental retardation, motor disturbances, paroxysmal disorders, learning disabilities, language and behavioral disorders, intracranial hypertension, meningoencephalitis, and a final chapter representing a pot-pourri of miscellaneous problems not easily categorized in other chapters. Neuromuscular disorders are included in the chapter on motor disturbances rather than being separated as an independent chapter as most modern English language textbooks would have done. The book contains very little information on neuro-embryology and congenital malformations of the nervous system, a deficiency perhaps reflecting my own personal orientation but nevertheless an important aspect of neonatal and paediatric neurology. Metabolic diseases also receive only scant attention. Neoplasms of the nervous system are included in the chapter on intracranial hypertension, though such a grouping might imply to trainees that increased intracranial pressure is a reliable and constant finding in all brain tumors, even if the text does not clarify this mistaken inference. I have the same objection to the inclusion of "coma" in this chapter on intracranial hypertension. The editors' attempt to organize the book by chapters denoting clinical presentation rather than traditional disease categories is thus only partially successful.

The text is sparingly but selectively and adequately illustrated, but because of the lower cost paper used in printing, some of the figures of imaging and of histopathology in particular have lost the sharp detail that is more early reproduced on expensive glossy pages.

For those amongst us who read Spanish, this book offers many refreshing perspectives that differ from our ingrained North American dogma, though the authors do not express ideas that diverge radically from interpretations of evidence generally accepted throughout the western world. I would recommend this book to paediatric neurologists who read even a little Spanish because it is much more than a restatement of English language textbooks of child neurology.

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TRANSIENT GLOBAL AMNESIA AND RELATED DISORDERS. 1990. Edited by Hans J. Markowitsch. Published by Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, Germany. 223 pages.

Few clinical presentations are as dramatic and bewildering as an episode of transient global amnesia (TGA). While the syndrome is well described, the etiology remains elusive, partly because of the transient nature of the symptoms and signs. This edited book attempts a comprehensive review, beginning with a historical introduction by the editor, followed by a clinical overview by Louis R. Caplan. There are chapters on TGA in relation to TIA, stroke, space occupying lesions, epilepsy, head trauma, migraine, and drugs. The book also includes chapters on atypical semiology of TGA, cerebral blood flow and pharmacological tests during TGA, positron emission tomographic studies, transient epileptic amnesia, neuropsychological testing during TGA and at follow-up, prognosis, transient psychogenic amnesic state and medicolegal aspects of TGA.

Like the memory disorder during TGA, the book is extensive but uneven. The chapters vary in style and quality. Although Markowitsch tends to write in slightly quaint English, his grasp of the historical and psychiatric literature of TGA is impressive. The chapter by Caplan on characteristic features of TGA is lucid and sets out criteria that while arbitrary, have the virtue of indicating the need or otherwise of investigation and prognosis. The chapter by Croisile and colleagues shows a remarkable degree of persistence and luck in documenting pharmacological testing and cerebral blood flow during TGA. S.D. Parwatikar has authored a fascinating chapter on the medicolegal aspects of TGA. He discusses transient memory loss as a legal defense, and in regard to the capacity to consent, the capacity to stand trial, competency to serve a sentence and several other issues, including sexual intercourse and TGA, enlivened by an example of a divorce case in which adultery was alleged.

The editor suggests that the incidence of TGA is rising in industrialized countries and the blurb on the back cover suggests that TGA is largely unknown to the medical community. If true, then this book is too extensive and inconsistent to educate physicians who are not neurologists. Even neurologists may find the book more useful as a reference than as a text.

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EPILEPSY: CURRENT APPROACHES TO DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT. 1990. Edited by Dennis B. Smith. Published by Raven Press. 276 pages. \$94 Cdn. approx.

This is one of several books to appear in the last decade devoted to the topic of epilepsy. As pointed out in the preface recent publications have run the gamut from very general to highly specialized. The editor states that this book is directed primarily at the primary care physician. This might be true for a family physician with a very special interest in epilepsy but I feel that the audience most likely to benefit will be residents in neurology, neurosurgery and psychiatry, as well as clinical neu-