field. Thus, even with varying objectives by each author(s), such detailed analyses of knowledge about SLE provide a valuable resource for the clinician.

Lahita’s 1992 edition of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus provides an updated, though editorially inconsistent, consideration of the disease, suitable for clinicians and researchers alike. Even though much of its information may already have grown outdated by this time and some of the text may not read as easily as other reference works, the review format taken by many of the authors provides a substantial forum for clinical and research data. Of concern, perhaps, remains a comparison of this edition to Wallace and Hahn’s 1993 Dubois’ Lupus Erythematous (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger), which may arguably contain a range of information beyond that of Lahita’s book. Such a judgement, however, remains more with the individual reader, since the spectrum of Dubois’ tends toward encyclopedic proportions. Lahita’s Systemic Lupus Erythematous attempts to remain compressed despite its breadth, and consequently falters and benefits at the same time.

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FETAL TISSUE TRANSPLANTS IN MEDICINE. Edited by Robert G. Edwards. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1992. 352 pp. $110.00.

This hardcover compilation of the current medical research and clinical applications of fetal tissue transplantation is excellent in purpose and composition. As the book was designed to present not only a broad but complete coverage of this field, Professor Edwards has succeeded in assembling a comprehensive text that combines enjoyable reading with relevant knowledge of a rapidly advancing field.

The book commences with a brief overview of development from fertilization through organogenesis. The authors of those first two chapters had the grueling task of managing copious amounts of very detailed material, but they juggle the information deftly and in a manner accessible to the reader. The second chapter supplies an excellent review of gastrulation and neurulation. The presentation of these stages of development is very informative and interesting, yet does not overwhelm the reader with details. The presentation of fetal development occurs side-by-side with a discussion of stages where grafting differentiating embryos and their outgrowths considered. Much research data are presented and more than adequately referenced. This provides the reader not only with a general understanding of present knowledge in this field, but by listing pertinent research articles, allows for a more in-depth investigation in specific areas that may interest the reader.

Current topics such as the testing of anti-HIV drugs and the benefits of RU486 for elective abortions enhance the discussion of fetal tissue transplantation. Additionally, the description of patient cases, interspersed with the scientific data, effectively ties together the scientific and clinical aspects of fetal tissue transplantation, displaying the benefits and justifications of work in this area. One of the characteristics of this text, which greatly enhances its reading and maintains the reader’s interest, is the authors’ excitement about their areas of study. Not only did I find it extremely contagious, I also came to appreciate many of the beautiful scanning electron microscopy plates of embryos.

Finally, two chapters briefly review the legal and ethical issues relevant to use of fetal tissue. As the editor is British, the emphasis is naturally on British law; however,
comparisons are drawn between that and American law. Fetal tissue transplantation is a highly controversial issue and the subject of much current attention. Thus, the authors of these two chapters, in accordance with the design of this book, present all viewpoints for consideration, giving the reader a general understanding of the conflicting opinions under debate. Instead of simply taking a position on the validity of fetal tissue research and transplantation, the authors provide many references for further study by the interested reader. Sections 1–7 of the British Code of Practice held since 1989 by the Fetuses and Fetal Material Committee of Parliament are also included in the text.

Overall, this is an excellent book. Professor Edwards has completed a beautiful editing task, and his efforts should be commended. The sole drawback of the volume is its price. However, if one is not limited by financial constraints, and is searching for a comprehensive overview of the current status and substantiating evidence behind fetal tissue transplants, this book definitely is worth investigating.

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STRESS, THE AGING BRAIN, AND THE MECHANISMS OF NEURON DEATH. By Robert M. Sapolsky. Cambridge, M., The MIT Press, 1992. 429 pp. $55.00

Does stress kill brain cells, and if so, how? In Stress, The Aging Brain, and Mechanisms of Neuronal Death, Dr. Robert Sapolsky presents data supporting the disturbing notion that psychological stresses may be associated with chemical processes in the brain that subject neurons to toxic processes. Dr. Sapolsky's research, which has taken him from the African veldt to the neurobiology laboratory, provides a framework to orient readers to this interesting review.

In a well-crafted presentation, Dr. Sapolsky integrates his original research with related topics of great interest to neuroscientists, neurologists and psychiatrists. He takes care to review hot issues, such as the impact of glucocorticoids on brain function, the role of N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors in learning and neurotoxicity, and the function of nitric oxide as a mediator of NMDA receptor function. In a particularly creative step, Dr. Sapolsky bridges the traditional neuropharmacologic focus on neuro-modulation and the study of energy regulation within neurons during neuromodulation. He presents evidence to support the hypothesis that elevated glucocorticoid levels associated with stress deplete neuronal energy, making them less capable of fending off the toxic effects of inotropic excitatory amino acid receptor stimulation and its associated increase in calcium influx.

As the product of four years of work and "everything (he) knows as of January 10, 1992," this book contains a prodigious amount of information presented in a thoughtful and user-friendly fashion. It is evident that Dr. Sapolsky has considered challenges facing the reader. Each chapter begins with a review of the book to that point and finishes with a summary of concepts presented within the chapter. These efforts make the text more accessible and enhance its utility as a reference source. In a scientific world dominated by least publishable units and multi-authored texts, Dr. Sapolsky succeeds in developing his views on stress and neurotoxicity in depth with an informal and somewhat socratic style. This stylistic approach makes the large body of information presented more engaging to the reader.

Dr. Sapolsky acknowledges the limitations of his book, occasionally, as they appear in the text. He reviews rapidly evolving fields of research. As a result, significant devel-