Book Reviews

Principles of Molecular Neurosurgery
A. Freese, F. A. Simeone, P. Leone & C. Janson
Basel, S. Karger A.G., 2005
660 pp.
€ 263.00

There have been those in the last few years who have suggested that neurosurgery is a dying speciality. Interventional radiology, new drug therapies and other advances have begun to erode the traditional workload of neurosurgeons. This book suggests that there is currently a paradigm shift in neurosurgery from dealing with structural lesions to treating functional problems. This book, the latest edition from the Progress in Neurological Surgery series, aims to outline current developments in molecular and cellular technologies that will be used in the future to treat neurological disorders.

The book is broken into four sections. The first section outlines spinal and spinal cord disorders. It not only has chapters on spinal cord regeneration, but has sections discussing cellular and gene therapy approaches to degenerative disc disease, and molecular approaches to vertebral fusion. This is one of the most fascinating sections. It describes the molecular, cellular and genetic basis of disc degeneration, then outlines experimental techniques that may be promising.

The second section outlines approaches to functional and restorative molecular neurosurgery. It starts by outlining general techniques like xenotransplantation, gene therapy and stereotactic techniques before looking at applications in epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, dementias and chronic pain syndromes. The first few chapters in this series are particularly interesting. There is an excellent summary of how drugs could be delivered to the brain using gene therapy, convection-enhanced delivery, stem cells and growth factors, of how neuroprostheses may help to restore neural function.

The third section describes potential therapies for treating strokes and subarachnoid haemorrhage. Again, the possible molecular genetic targets are outlined and possible approaches discussed. The final section outlines molecular approaches to neuro-oncology. It concentrates its discussion on methods of getting drugs into tumours, immunotherapy, gene and stem cell therapies.

This book really makes you think about where neurosurgery is going. It is clear that we will need to have a thorough grounding in neuroscience as they will be involved in the translation of bench discoveries to the bedside. It will have a general appeal to neurosurgeons, neurologists and neuroscientists.

Stephen Price

DOI: 10.1080/02688690500390615

Advanced Therapy of Headache, 2nd edn
R. Allan Purdy, Alan M. Rapoport, Fred D. Sheftell & Stewart Tepper
Ontario, BC Decker, 2005
300 pp.
£58.99, ISBN 1550092529

Oh, how I envy medical students and trainees with the current range of textbooks that are so beautifully written and illustrated that make light of subjects such as headache, which were so turgidly presented years ago. This book is a brilliant example of how to present material in a clinically orientated way. Chapter 3, for example is entitled ‘The patients that William Osier never met’; Chapter 20 ‘The Woman with never ending headaches’; Chapter 43 ‘On medico-legal headaches—trials and tribulations’; Chapter 49 ‘A young man with new headache after mild head trauma’ give sufficient justification for purchase of the book. The Editors should be congratulated on drawing together a formidable list of experts from around the world. A CD ROM of the book is provided. This is very much a book for individual purchase. Please may we have a chapter on headache in patients with successfully shunted hydrocephalus and BIH in the next edition?

J. D. Pickard

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Head Injury, Pathophysiology Management, 2nd edn, 2005
P. L. Reilly & R. Bullock
London, Hodder and Arnold
501 pp.
£145.00, ISBN 0-340807245

This is simply the best text available that covers the whole subject of head injury. Epidemiology, biomechanics, pathology, basic science, multimodality bedside monitoring and management are all covered by international experts. The Editors have done a splendid job in producing a beautifully illustrated,
lucid and coherent review of all aspects of the subject. The excellent chapter on outcome provides sufficient material for the neurosurgical audience but much more space will be required for definitive treatment of neurorehabilitation which fortunately is provided by the recently published 2nd edition of *Traumatic Brain Injury—Rehabilitative Treatment and Case Management* edited by Mark J Ashley (2004). Reilly and Bullock's text is now a classic and should be on the book shelves of all involved with the management of this very large population of patients who have never had the investment that they deserve in comparison, for example, with victims of spinal cord injury and stroke.

J. D. PICKARD

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**Training in Neurosurgery in the Countries of the EU—A Guide To Organise a Training Programme**

H. J. REULEN (Ed.)

Wien, Springer, 2004

125 pp.

EUR 98.00 (hb), ISBN 3-211-21322-8

A slim volume by members of the Joint Residency Advisory and Accreditation Committee (JRAAC) offering their advice and experience in developing and improving neurosurgical training programmes. This is a practical guide written by neurosurgeons running training programmes across the European continent.

Chapters include details of the new neurosurgical training charter from the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), the responsibilities of programme directors, the neurosurgical curriculum and structured plans of training, accreditation of programmes and neurosurgical logbooks. Some of the chapters are really editorials and of necessity there is a degree of overlap and repetition. However, a reasonably consistent theme is maintained and I particularly enjoyed the chapters by Donlin Long and Ken Lindsay.

There are now 25 countries in the European Union and over 30 European countries send trainees to the EANS training courses. It is well recognised that there are marked differences across these countries in the quality of training and there is therefore increasing pressure to harmonise training within a 'European Model' with agreed standards and accreditation.

Neurosurgical training in the United Kingdom is in the process of tremendous change and this book is full of practical ideas and guidelines on setting up and running a training programme within a European context. I would recommend this book to anybody who is involved in neurosurgical training.

P. FOY

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