

Book Reviews

PRINCIPLES OF NEUROLOGY. 6TH EDITION. 1997. By Raymond D. Adams, Maurice Victor, Allan H. Ropper. Published by McGraw Hill. 1618 pages.

This is the sixth edition in the past 20 years of this classic text. It has expanded 60% in this time from 1040 to 1618 pages and added a third author, Allan H. Ropper. He brings teaching skills and attitudes similar to the two senior authors plus his expertise in peripheral nerve disease, coma and stroke, as well as his abiding and lengthy concern for the critical care neurologic patient.

Again the book approaches neurology from the "major manifestation(s)" of disease and the anatomy, physiology and natural grouping of these to lead to a known syndrome or disease. The contributions of basic science methods and research, where applicable to diseases, are added to the primary clinical presentations.

I have read all the pages devoted to epilepsy, headache, multiple sclerosis, muscle diseases, Parkinson's disease, stroke, and neuropathies. Including the physiology, pathology and diagnostic aids applicable to these various diseases this amounts to 30% of the book. All are superb. The sections on muscle physiology, aids to diagnosis, and diseases are a tour de force. Unfortunately, in the headache section the chimeric tension headache persists.

Perhaps the seventh edition should be in two volumes.

If students, residents, or physicians (neurologists, internists, pediatricians, intensivists, orthopedists or psychiatrists) want a near encyclopedia of neurology and can buy only one, buy this one.

The authors are again to be congratulated.

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MINIMALLY INVASIVE THERAPY OF THE BRAIN. 1997. Edited by A. De Salles and R. Lufkin. Published by Thieme. 292 pages. \$C246.00 approx.

This book is a multi-authored volume edited by a neurosurgeon and a radiologist, on an extremely important direction in modern health care – that of minimally invasive therapy. There are 21 chapters by a total of 40 authors, primarily neurosurgeons, neuroradiologists and radiation oncologists from the United States and Germany. In the preface, the editors state that the book is designed to document the new techniques available for treatment of brain pathologies that are competitive with the traditional large surgical approaches and that it is directed at the appropriate specialists as well as primary care physicians and motivated lay persons. The two latter groups would very likely not find this book particularly useful. In the preface there are also two "advertisements" on how to get more information on the course the editors have conducted for 5 years, which this reviewer finds a little too commercial.

The book is generally well written and edited and contains much valuable information on the basic concepts and tools available within the current armamentarium of physicians and surgeons involved in minimally invasive treatment of a variety of morphological and functional conditions affecting the brain. The book is attractively laid out although a significant number of reproductions

of imaging studies and other photographs and computer-generated graphics are of poor quality.

There are a number of conspicuous omissions from this text. Arguably the single most important building block for modern minimally invasive therapy was the development of frame-based stereotactic techniques over 4 decades ago. The most widely used minimally invasive techniques in neurosurgery to date world-wide have been stereotactic biopsy and stereotactic lesion-making and these important topics are not dealt with in any depth. At minimum a chapter by one of the authorities in the field on the indications, techniques, complications, and failure rate of frame-based stereotactic biopsy should have been front and center in this book. Stereotactic brachytherapy, while not terribly efficacious for malignant brain tumors, is a very interesting application of minimally invasive therapy with a fairly long history and this topic is treated only superficially in the chapter on radiosurgery of malignant brain tumors. An extremely useful and important technique for minimizing complications and length of hospital stay associated with image guided craniotomy is the technique of awake surgery with cortical mapping both to obviate the morbidity of a general anesthetic and to decrease the chance of incurring neurological deficit from disruption of vital cortical structures. A chapter on anesthetic techniques for minimally invasive brain surgery would have been a valuable addition to this volume. Finally, the modern frameless image-guidance systems are vital adjuncts to localizing small but strategically placed bone flaps and assessing the extent of tumor resection and this point could have been emphasized by including a surgical series from one of the experts in appropriation of importance and uplighting to various subtopics there are significant inconsistencies in the field. Conversely, in spite of the importance of radiosurgery in treating AVMs and benign brain neoplasms, this subject is probably over-represented in this volume with 5 chapters dedicated to various aspects of it. Besides the above cited inconsistencies in the length, depth of detail, and number of references from chapter to chapter which further weakens the book.

As the editors acknowledge, this is a rapidly evolving field. Peer-reviewed publications in the neurosurgical and imaging literature as well as presentations at national and international meetings and other forms of information networking will appear at increasing rates and this will represent the major source of information for physicians and surgeons involved in the care of patients with minimally invasive techniques. Courses and workshops on this subject, which the editors have pioneered, will also continue to play an important educational role. While this is overall a good book containing useful and well documented information and providing a good overview of an important and exciting area of medicine, it is not comprehensive, lacks detail in certain areas, and because of the rapid evolution of the field, will soon be outdated.

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INFECTIONS OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. 2ND EDITION. 1997. Edited by W. Michael Scheld, Richard J. Whitley and David T. Durack. Published by Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1064 pages. \$C267.00 approx.

This book is undoubtedly the "reference standard" for those seeking a text devoted to the topic of infectious diseases in the