

## Book Reviews

### ELECTRIC RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

Solomon Abramovich 1990  
Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh  
ISBN 0-443-03884-8.  
Price £25.00. pp 192. Figs. 88.

This new concise text by Solomon Abramovich, with contributions by Roger Thornton provides a valuable replacement volume for the earlier texts summarising the clinical application of auditory evoked response audiometry. The book is divided into an introductory section covering the anatomy and physiology of the auditory system, together with an excellent chapter on the basic scientific principles underlying this technique—‘the practising clinician does not need to know precisely how an evoked potential system works, but he or she does need to know when it is not working’.

The middle section of the book is comprised of chapters dedicated to each auditory evoked test and its application in disorders of hearing. Unusually, in a clinical textbook equal weight is given to the scientific aspects of the test and the clinical applications. As outlined in the foreword, the book is directed at clinicians concerned primarily with the hearing impaired. This is reflected in the relative paucity of information on the value of ERA in the investigation of neurological disorders associated with involvement of the auditory pathways, *e.g.* there is no discussion of the differentiation of extrinsic *versus* intrinsic brainstem tumours by brain stem evoked audiometry and no mention of the multiplicity of neurological disorders which demonstrate an associated auditory impairment, as part of the constellation of symptomatology.

The book concludes with eight chapters on the use of ERA in specific situations such as neurological assessment, the difficult to test child and cochlear stimulation. These various chapters vary in the depth to which each subject is reviewed and while the paediatric chapters are relatively detailed, the neuro-otological and neurological disorders are briefly considered and the value of ERA in tinnitus and dizzy patients merit only a few lines.

In conclusion this text provides a valuable manual with clear descriptions and instructions in the basic scientific approach to reliable evoked response audiometry. For the practising Otologist there is valuable information on the routine assessment of auditory thresholds, the investigation of acoustic neuromas and the diagnosis of Menière’s disease. There is however less detailed information on other disorders of auditory function. Nonetheless a clear understanding of the information contained in this book

would be invaluable to anyone regularly using evoked response audiometry in clinical practice. There is an excellent reference list, particularly of the early basic work in this field and a clear extensive index.

Linda Luxon.

### TOMODENSITOMÉTRIE DE L’OREILLE

B. Le Roux, A. Lacan. 1991 Masson: Paris.

Potential purchasers of this little book need not be put off by their imperfect command of French: only about 30 of its 118 pages are text, the remainder consisting of almost 200 figures, many multiple, with captions. A handful of diagrams apart, all the illustrations are CT sections of almost uniformly high quality.

An introductory section disposes of otological pathophysiology in two text pages; the French penchant for anatomy is evident in the succeeding two chapters, despite their claim to deal with CT technique. The core of the book is, however, the five chapters which cover lesions of the external auditory meatus, middle ear, inner ear, trauma and the internal auditory meatus/cerebellopontine angle region. The second and last of these are the most substantial, although one gets the feeling that the authors see little angle pathology; they do not illustrate a single neuroma shown by air meatography or any positive contrast cisternogram, and show almost as many recurrent neuromas as primary lesions.

M.M. Le Roux and Lacan, as far as I can determine, are radiologists in a private CT unit in Paris, obviously with a large otological clientele. They go in for very little critical evaluation of the indications for CT or its contribution to management. Indeed, the authors’ gallycally enthusiastic promotion of their services leads to statements such as ‘a CT study is indispensable for diagnosis and assessment of soft tissue masses in the external auditory meatus’, with which many British otologists might not agree. Rigorous editing is notable by its absence. I could trace text citations of virtually none of the bibliography’s 64 references, at least a quarter of which contain typographical errors.

Nice though the pictures are, I cannot really recommend this book; francophiles for whom breakfast has never been the same since the revamping of the HP sauce bottle might enjoy it, but English-speaking otologists who wanted something along these lines would be better advised to look elsewhere.

Ivan Moseley.