Book Reviews

Handbook of Neurological Lists, edited by L.M. Brass and P.K. Stys. Pp. xv + 397, not illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, London, Melbourne, New York, Tokyo, Edinburgh, 1991. Paperback £22.00.

Reviewers, sent books which include the word 'List' in their title, either shudder and start writing letters complaining about declining standards in student learning methods, or they reach for their red pen and start adding things which they believe to be essential. The authors at least invite you to do the latter having presented the reader (or perhaps better called the browser, for this book, is not an easy read by any stretch of the imagination), with a series of daunting lists and instructions. It is easy, but not very productive, to start picking holes in lists, for example, in the section entitled Differential Diagnosis, placing Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease with Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis does little credit to recent advances in our understanding of prion diseases, and to group Meningeal Carcinomatosis with Paraneoplastic Disorders is surely inaccurate.

At the end of the day lists are merely lists and tell you nothing about diseases. The trouble with these lists is their order; they fail to guide the reader in terms of clinical likelihood. More useful would have been some grouping into what is common, less common and as rare as 'hens teeth'. Whilst references acknowledge the list's source; the book would have been more useful for the neurological trainee if each section was referenced to a discussion of the list content.

In this computerized age *Handbook of Neurological Lists* perhaps might have been suited for use on a PC and made available through public domain software at a more acceptable price.

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Tutorials in Clinical Surgery in General, F.G. Smiddy. Pp. xi + 311. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, Tokyo, 1991. Paperback £19.95.

The author has responded promptly to the changes in the syllabus associated with the Clinical Surgery-in-General Examination. The book does not attempt to provide the depth of knowledge necessary for this examination but provides an excellent framework for study and revision. The chapters on preoperative assessment and postoperative complications are particularly good but could perhaps have focused a little more on the implications of the increase in day case work. This book will prove a very valuable aid to study.

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Diagnostic Radiology: An Anglo American Textbook of Imaging, 3 Vols, edited by Ronald Grainger and David Allison. Pp. 2760, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, London, New York, Melbourne, Tokyo, Edinburgh, 1991. Hardback £295.00.

This is the second edition of a highly acclaimed radiological textbook combining the British and American expertise. The editors have succeeded in maintaining the excellent quality of the text and incorporating many of the new advances that have occurred since the first edition.

The book is aimed not only at radiologists in training, but also as a quick reference for the established radiologists and physicians. Much of the original format has been retained; the existing chapters are updated and 18 new chapters added. The first section starts with a chapter on departmental organization and digital radiology, and includes useful chapters on contrast media and the physics of the various imaging modalities. The subsequent 11 sections cover the various organs with emphasis on a multi-modality approach.

Interventional radiology is covered extensively; there are chapters at the end of each section dealing with procedures relating to the particular organs, as well as a separate section covering all aspects of interventional techniques.

Many of the chapters include tables and imaging algorithms to help the reader with the differential diagnosis and choice of imaging. The illustrations are uniformly good and the references are generally up to date with suggestions for further reading for those who want to expand on a particular subject. A useful glossary of the terms used in chest radiology is also included.

Criticisms are few and minor, and mainly reflect the editorial difficulties in maintaining uniformity in a text with contributions from over 100 authors; traumatic tear of the aortic arch, for example, features in three different chapters. There is perhaps too much emphasis on angiography whilst more CT examples could have been included; thin section CT of the thorax receives little attention and CT pelvimetry is not discussed.

Overall, this is an excellent textbook that is reasonably priced and should be available in every radiological department and general medical library.

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Vascular Anesthesia, edited by J.A. Kaplan. Pp. 700, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, New York, Melbourne, Tokyo, 1991. Hardback £65.00.

Early chapters describe the assessment of risk and the state of the vascular system. I wonder how many patients benefit from all the assessments and treatments described in the chapter on optimization. Maybe more will, if more anaesthetists and surgeons read this text. I like the introduction to each section, the scope of the problem is