

Living Well with Epilepsy, by Robert J. Gumnit. New York: Demos Publications, 1989, 176 pp. Price: hardcover, \$19.95; softcover, \$11.95.

Living Well with Epilepsy is an extraordinarily well-arranged manual for parents, laypeople, and even physicians. Because of its complete and comprehensive overview of the condition, this book should be considered standard reading material for all who live or deal with epilepsy. Basically an introductory primer on epilepsy, this book, nevertheless, is an excellent reference book for even those with exposure to the condition.

Dr. Gumnit has produced a work disguised to allay the flood of fears and misconceptions that parents, patients, friends, and relatives assume when confronted with the diagnosis "epilepsy." In simple and straightforward language, he answers all your questions, philosophical and practical. "Is it a good idea to keep epilepsy a secret?" "Can I save money by substituting a generic brand for my medication?" "How should I handle the subject of epilepsy when dating?"

Intended initially for nonmedical people, it should be suggested reading material for physicians caring for epileptics. It will provide a quick reference on the more common "daily living" questions not often covered during the office visit. He also tackles family, personal, and social concerns as well as giving names and sources for further reading and information.

Living Well with Epilepsy is organized well. Dr. Gumnit breaks down each section into the most commonly asked questions and *answers* them clearly, concisely, and with an eye for keeping things short and to the point. This book should be considered a "first manual for epilepsy."

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The Clinical Relevance of Kindling, edited by Tom G. Bolwig and Michael R. Trimble. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 302 pp. Price: \$67.50.

Since the original description in 1967 by Graham Goddard, kindling has become one of the most widely studied animal models of epilepsy. Kindling, the phenomenon in which an initially subconvulsive stimulation, when given repeatedly, results in a generalized convulsion, is an excellent model of partial seizures with secondary generalization. The model is attractive because the kindling phenomenon, once it occurs, appears to be permanent.

As noted in the preface, study of the kindling phe-

nomenon was initially limited to neurophysiologists. Interest in kindling is now much broader, attracting the attention of neurologist, psychologists, psychiatrists, and even patients. Bowling and Trimble, therefore, felt a book that would "shed more light on some of the controversial and more or less well-documented aspects of this whole intriguing area of research" would be of interest. They were correct.

In *The Clinical Relevance of Kindling*, they have brought together contributors from a wide range of fields. While the title indicates that the book will deal with clinical issues only, there are a number of basic science articles including chemical kindling by Wasterlain and colleagues, intracerebral grafting of neurons in kindling models by Barry et al., and a chapter by Racine et al. on the anatomical substrate of kindling. The remainder of the book deals with clinical issues such as the relationship between kindling and convulsive therapy, manic-depressive disease, addictive behavior, memory, and panic disorders.

The contributing authors met for a symposium, and some of the discussions regarding their presentations are included. The 17 brief chapters covering a broad variety of topics coupled with the questions and answers provide interesting and sometimes controversial reading. Although the date of the symposium is not stated, references are reasonably current.

In general, the chapters are written in a uniform, clear style. Some, but not all, of the chapters have summaries, a feature that should have been required for all chapters. Figures and tables complement the text well.

The book will be of worthwhile reading for clinicians desiring more information about current thoughts on neurological and psychiatric diseases and kindling. The book would also benefit researchers using kindling techniques in the laboratory. By today's standards, the book is fairly priced.

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Neurobiology of Disease, edited by Alan L. Perlman and Robert C. Collins. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, 482 pp.

From Hughlings Jackson's *On the Anatomical, Physiological and Pathological Investigation of the Epilepsies*: "... There is, in brief, (1) anatomy, (2) physiology, (3) pathology in each case." So begins and states the theme of this multiauthored text, whose stated audience consists of medical students and physicians, for

which it provides "an introduction to the scientific basis in neurology" as well as graduate students and scientists in neurobiology, where it "describes the expression of fundamental mechanism gone awry." Indeed, it does a good job of doing both.

The book is divided into two main sections, the first being "Functional and Anatomical Systems," and the second "Disease Processes." The former delves into the basic tenets of neurology in moderate detail, beginning at the axon and progressing upward both teleologically and ontologically to the cerebral cortex. Each chapter is well written and correlates to other areas in the text. Clinical issues are also covered, both in individual areas as related to that particular section, as well as in the "Case Classics," in which a particular case is described and illustrates a point made in the text. The last chapter in that section, "Memory and Amnesia," acts as a bridge to the more clinical section of the text and builds on most of the preceding material.

The clinical section covers most major areas of pathology in the nervous system, with additional chapters on cerebrospinal fluid and genetic disorders, the latter using Huntington's disease as a paradigm. These chapters are written in less detail than the first part of the book but still provide a reasonable amount of information in a concise manner. The general references provide a source of additional detail for the interested reader. An understanding of the first part of the book is not a necessity when reading each of these sections but does make understanding of such easier. Of necessity, although there is some correlation between each chapter in this part of the book, it is less than for the first section. The "Case Classics" in this section are as well selected and relevant as Part One of the text.

This book fulfills most of the objectives presented in the introduction. It provides an excellent review for the practicing clinician and is a sound introduction to the neurosciences for both medical and graduate students. It would be the ideal text for a neuroscience course at the end of the first or second year of medical school, as well as a reference and review for a neurology clerkship. It would probably be less valuable for more senior graduate students who would require a more detailed text. In general, although there are some minor annoyances (e.g., footnotes for Table 2-1 are absent), this textbook is an excellent introduction into neurobiology and is recommended reading for those interested in an introduction to neuroscience as well as for those teaching it.

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The Epilepsies. Diagnosis and Management, by E. Niedermeyer. Baltimore: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1990, 410 pp. Price: \$65.00.

This single-authored book, a very difficult task with today's "mercilessly progressive subspecialization" as described by the author in the preface, is his legacy to the field of epilepsy after 35 years of dedicated personal experience.

The basic mechanisms of epileptic phenomena and the EEG chapters are comprehensive and well organized. The clinical chapters express the author's vast experience and are interesting, and provocative, although sometimes controversial. It is unfortunate that the definitions and classification of epileptic seizures and epileptic syndromes as proposed by the Commission on Classification and Terminology of the International League Against Epilepsy are not used consistently. Those chapters dedicated to medical treatment reflect Dr. Niedermeyer's personal views, frequently without referencing more widely accepted antiepileptic therapy, specifically when applied to children. The neurosurgical treatment of the epilepsies is an excellent review of the different approaches and their results. The only radiographic reproduction in the book is less than optimal, and the use of sketches rather than photographs makes the illustrations less descriptive.

In general, the book may be best appreciated by physicians who specialize in epilepsy and who can accurately judge the author's personal views.

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Immunologic Mechanisms in Neurologic and Psychiatric Disease, edited by Byron H. Waksman. 1990.

The Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease (ARNMD) conducts an annual symposium devoted to a single area of research in which important advances have been made recently and then publishes the proceedings as a Research Publication. The current volume, which is ARNMD Research Publication Number 68, is a worthy addition to this distinguished series. Forty-six well-qualified contributors have written 26 chapters, each of which is a state-of-the-art research review with extensive references including many from 1988 and a few from 1989. The quality of publication and illustration is very high. As a whole, the book is a well-balanced and carefully