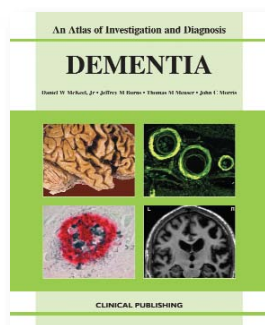


If you would like to review books for ACNR, please contact Andrew Larner, Book Review Editor, c/o rachael@acnr.com

## An Atlas of Investigation and Diagnosis: Dementia

This book emanates from the renowned Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at the Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, which has been particularly influential in recent times in developing the concept of mild cognitive impairment as defined by staging with the Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR) and correlating this with neuropathological findings.

The book's title may be something of a misnomer since, although clinical features and neuroimaging are alluded to and there is an excellent chapter (2) on clinical assessment, it is neuropathology which is emphasised throughout. Chapters cover systematically the neuropathology of normal aging, of preclinical and clinical Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, frontotemporal dementias, and miscellaneous other dementing disorders including Huntington's disease, prionoses, and multiple sclerosis. As might be



anticipated of an atlas, the work is beautifully illustrated with high quality images throughout.

One might quibble about the occasional absence in chapter reference lists of papers cited in the text, and sometimes a mismatch between reference and context. James Parkinson is credited with a knighthood (128) which he may, from a neurological perspective, have merited but which he surely never received (has he possibly been confused with Sir John Parkinson (1885-1976) of Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome?).

Certainly this book will be a welcome addition to the departmental library, but as regards personal copies its appeal may be chiefly to neuropathologists.

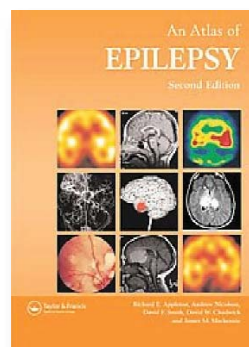
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## Atlas of Epilepsy, 2nd edition

Epilepsy is a rather beautiful area of neurology. The diagnosis is made mainly from the patient and eye-witness account of the event, and clinical examination usually adds little. The need to focus on the event semiology for diagnosis makes history-taking here crucial, particularly given for most cases, there is no confirmatory test to prove or disprove the clinical diagnosis (apart from the occasional patient who requires prolonged EEG monitoring). As seizures may be symptomatic of other disease, it flows into the other branches of neurology, such as oncology, vascular disease etc. It is satisfying in that diagnosing the nature of transient episodes of altered consciousness can be difficult. For those fortunate enough to work in a regional neuroscience centre, it can be immensely satisfying to be where the buck stops, and be in a position to call on the full armamentarium of neurophysiological investigations, and ultimately be able to provide a definitive diagnosis in a patient who may have carried an unsatisfactory diagnosis of probable or possible epilepsy, often for many years. Drug treatment of established epilepsy is itself an art, and epilepsy surgery is arguably the most fascinating aspect of the condition. For those cases, the aim of marrying up the clinical semiology with imaging and EEG data, proposing a hypothesis of location of seizure onset and pattern of propagation, and then testing this hypothesis with videoEEG and ictal SPECT, is especially enjoyable, and gives intriguing insight into brain-behaviour relations.

Epilepsy, however, remains challenging to epileptologists, let alone neurologists who do not subspecialise in this area. Leaving aside neurologists, with increasing subspecialisation and the disappearance of the general physicians, non-neurology hospital physicians are increasingly and understandably reluctant to diagnose



and treat epilepsy, especially in view of recent medico-legal events. This is of course no bad thing, provided there are sufficient neurologists to meet the demand. There remains, however, a need for general practitioners and non-neurology hospital specialists to remain acquainted with epilepsy.

This book is well placed to educate such physicians: it aims to be an introductory text of epilepsy, and is targeted at trainee neurologists and general practitioners, but will also be of use to all hospital physicians and to neurosurgeons, and to epilepsy nurse specialists.

It is organised in the traditional manner, namely basic science, diagnosis, aetiology, prognosis, treatment. In view of its limited size and its excellent production, the book sensibly focuses on illustrations rather than text. The EEGs, imaging and pathology illustrations are uniformly excellent. It is well written, and the figure legends are comprehensive. Suitable up-to-date references and further reading are included. It is free of typos, and is well indexed. Clinically relevant studies are given due prominence, namely MRC drug withdrawal, MRC early epilepsy and single seizures, and SANAD (Standard and new antiepileptic drugs).

This book occupies a niche of being a sound atlas of epilepsy, and will be particularly useful for hospital physicians and GPs. Career neurologists will find it useful, but those subspecialising in epilepsy will want something more comprehensive like Shorvon et al's 'The treatment of epilepsy'. The book does not pretend, however, to be anything other than an atlas and introduction to epilepsy, and is recommended.

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