

## Book review

---

**Current Neurology, Vol. 17**, edited by S.H. Appel, IOS Press, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1997, 321 pp.

The goal of the Current Neurology series is to provide a collection of brief up-to-date reviews of advances in the Neurosciences and their application to Neurological disease. Volume 17 has ten such chapters, all relevant to my work as a clinical neurologist, and a valuable resource for those wishing to access succinct information.

The book starts with an excellent chapter by Drs Tsao and Mendell of Ohio State University on the muscular dystrophies. In 34 pages they brought me up to date with the clinical features and genetics of Duchenne, Becker, fascioscapulohumeral and limb girdle dystrophies, dystrophia myotonica and the relative rarities such as Emery-Dreifuss, Fukuyama and Oculopharyngeal dystrophies. Tips on diagnosis and treatment are also provided. This is followed by Massimo Pandolfo's chapter on Friedreich's ataxia which presents the topic beautifully in its historical context, a reliable sign of mastery of a speciality. This chapter is complemented by one on trinucleotide repeat expansion disorders which includes sections on the complex and often confusing topics of the spinocerebellar ataxias and dentatorubral-pallidoluyisian atrophy where clinical features are so heterogeneous.

Perhaps of greatest interest to most clinicians will be the chapter on the genetics of Alzheimer's disease, which emphasises that the neuropathological hallmarks ( $\beta$ -amyloid deposits, neurofibrillary tangles, gliosis and neuronal loss) are the end products, in most patients, of the interaction of many different genetic predispositions. Although the genetics of amyloid precursor protein, apolipoprotein E and the presenilins are covered well, their interaction with envi-

ronmental insults such as head injury, cerebrovascular disease and smoking are, unfortunately, ignored, presumably because they were considered beyond the scope of the chapter. This might lead the unwary into believing they are unimportant, which is very far from the case.

The chapter on new treatments for multiple sclerosis I found a disappointment. Few of us would think of T cell vaccination, monoclonal antibody treatment or DNA vaccination rank first amongst the exciting new therapies available. Perhaps I am out of touch, but surely there would have been a place for a review of the interferons and intravenous immunoglobulin treatment? Instead I was left with the distinct impression of hobby horses being exercised here. In marked contrast is a very down-to-earth chapter by James Grotta on cerebrovascular disease, a masterly piece by William Ondo and Joseph Jankovic on restless legs (which I almost understood) and a useful chapter on therapeutic neuro-ophthalmology by Andrew Lee and Paul Brazis which reviews briefly such useful topics as optic nerve sheath fenestration for anterior ischaemic optic neuropathy, treatment of Graves disease and shunting for idiopathic intracranial hypertension. The chapters on pain mechanisms and neuronal migration disorders are for the obsessional only.

The current volume has an abundance of topical information, most of it presented stylishly and succinctly. There is a distinct bias towards genetics, understandable in the context of the aim to provide information on the latest advances in the understanding of the conditions, but perhaps of less interest to the practising clinician. All chapters are extensively referenced. Highly recommended.

Richard Grünewald  
*Sheffield, UK*



# Hindawi

Submit your manuscripts at  
<http://www.hindawi.com>

