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Trends in Neuroimmunology

David H. Mattson, MD, PhD

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Abstract

This book represents the proceedings of the International Symposium on Trends in Neuroimmunology, Cagliari, Italy, in 1988. Based on this book, the symposium was excellent and would have been well worth attending. The authors of chapters are a distinguished international group of neuroimmunologists, mostly from Italy and other parts of Europe.

The book is organized into chapters on four broad areas representing current aspects of intense interest in neuroimmunology—humoral immunity, cellular immunity, immune functions of glia, and central nervous system immune diseases. Chapters describing work in human and animal systems are intermingled in a mutually reinforcing and provocative manner. Most of the chapters are original research reports, but two are review articles.

Several of the chapters describing original research reports are excellent, state-of-the-art accounts, some of which have subsequently either partially or completely appeared in print in refereed journals. These include chapters on antioligodendrocyte autoreactive T cells, human fetal brain

First Page Preview

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Books

Mutism: Studies in Disorders of Communication, by Yvan Lebrun, 124 pp, \$29, London, England, Whurr Publishers, 1990.

Lebrun's short monograph offers a readable overview of mutism in all of its aspects. The text presents a wide-ranging pastiche of sundry "condition[s] in which there is no, or very little, oral-verbal expression, whilst comprehension . . . is normal or at least at a considerably higher level than oral-verbal output" (p 1). Organized into a short chapter on the psychology of silence and two longer chapters on functional mutism and organic mutism, the book is significant more for its breadth than for its depth. The text is amply referenced and has a useful subject and author index.

Topics, almost dazzling in their variety, range from akinetic mutism to aphemia, from esophageal speech to speech apraxia, from monastic silence to the family dynamics of children who maintain silence at school, from mutism after cerebral commissurotomy to muteness of the famous "wild child" of Aveyron. Lebrun's general approach is to provide vignettes illustrating each subject under discussion. Here the book is at its lucid best. Vignettes include not only generous summaries of case reports from the clinical literature but also illuminating examples from art, classic and modern literature, mythology, the Bible, and anthropology. Even etymology and slang expression find their way into Lebrun's eclectic treatise.

Mutism is more descriptive than explanatory, and some neurologists will look askance at the treatment of certain material. How, for example, are eating, toileting, copulating, and speaking—the four "primary modes of interaction with the environment" (p 45)—alike? Each of these, according to

Cursory explanations of organic causes of mutism are also disappointing in their pathophysiologic and anatomic simplicity.

Is *Mutism* an essential reference for the neurologist's personal library? I think not. However, *Mutism* is an enjoyable survey that provides a broad, well-referenced introduction to multifaceted aspects of speechlessness; it is on this basis that I recommend the book.

VICTOR W. HENDERSON, MD
Los Angeles, Calif

Trends in Neuroimmunology, edited by M. G. Marrosu, C. Cianchetti, and B. Tavalato, 169 pp, \$50, New York, NY: Plenum Press, 1990.

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lymphotropic virus type I in patients with multiple sclerosis using polymerase chain reaction techniques is excellent, provides guidelines for others doing similar work, and has not appeared in any form elsewhere. Other chapters, however, on cerebrospinal fluid findings in patients infected with human immunodeficiency virus type 1 or in patients with MS discuss old techniques and confirm well-established concepts in Italian populations, or rework topics such as central nervous system IgG synthesis or B-cell responses in multiple sclerosis. The two review chapters on cerebrospinal fluid cytokines and on cellular immunity in slow viral infections are well written and referenced and provide interesting speculations.

The book would have been strengthened by having a review article in each broad subject area. Additionally, a question-and-answer or discussion section at the end of each chapter would have given the flavor of the discussions and interactions that took place at the symposium and that were enthusiastically referred to in the editors' introduction.

This book would hold much interest for those engaged in neuroimmunology research, but it is not comprehensive in its coverage of neuroimmunology. With the exception of the two review chapters, it is too specialized and would not hold great interest to a more general neurologic or medical audience.

DAVID H. MATTSON, MD, PhD
Rochester, NY

Neurologic Clinics, edited by William H. Theodore, 197 pp, with illus, \$33, Philadelphia, Pa: WB Saunders Co, 1990.

Clinical Neuropharmacology repre-

Lebrun in a discussion of functional mutism dynamics, "help[s] the individual outgrow an initial state of egocentrism and adapt to social life" (p 46). And what is a biologically oriented neuroscientist to conclude when words are metaphorically likened to sperm?

chapters on antioligodendrocyte autoreactive T cells, human fetal brain cultures, and immunologic parameters and therapies in an impressive number of patients with subacute sclerosing panencephalitis. The chapter describing a negative search for human T-cell

sents the February 1990 issue of *Neurologic Clinics*. As with most issues in this series, only selected topics are chosen for review. The volume is not appropriate, therefore, for someone looking for a broad overview of clinical neuropharmacology. Eight chapters

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