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Handbook on Cerebral Artery Dissection

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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

Handbook on Cerebral Artery Dissection

R.W. Baumgartner, J. Bogousslavsky, V. Caso, and M. Paciaroni, eds. Switzerland: Karger; 2005, 177 pages, 35 figures, 24 tables, $180.

In this 177-page monograph, contributions by 34 authors cover the topic of carotid and vertebral artery dissection, with one chapter on intracranial artery dissection. The epidemiology, genetics, pathophysiology, clinical features, and treatment are succinctly described, along with 3 chapters devoted to imaging, MR angiography, digital subtraction angiography, CT angiography, and sonography of this disorder. The MR and CT considerations are very basic, particularly from the technical point of view, and contain information that would find a greater audience among clinical neurologists.

Neurological Disorders in Famous Artists

J. Bogousslavsky and F. Boller, eds. Switzerland: Karger; 2005, 192 pages, 35 figures, 3 tables, $99.

In a departure from the usual monographs in the clinical neurosciences, 22 authors have contributed to this interesting description of neurologic disease in famous artists (painters, musicians, writers, poets). Because all of these artists are now deceased, there are no HIPAA violations. Eighteen famous figures and their medical problems are described along with examples of their works. Included are Poe, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Kant, Van Gogh, Ravel, Handel, Haydn, Gershwin, and Schulman, among others. You can match diseases such as syphilis, Alzheimer disease, substance abuse, convulsive disorders, Lewy body dementia, postinfarction dementia/depression, bipolar disorder, brain tumor, and Pick disease with the artist and see how their creativity declined as the diseases progressed.

MRI in Practice. 3rd ed.

C. Westbrook, C. Kaut Roth, and J. Talbot, eds. United Kingdom: Blackwell; 2005, 424 pages, 187 illustrations, $59.95.

With the use of many illustrations, charts, and images, Dr. Westbrook and her colleagues have provided a paperback book that explains in clear and simple language the key elements for understanding MR imaging. The book contains 12 chapters: basic principles; image weighting and contrast; encoding and image formation; parameters and trade-offs; pulse sequences; flow phenomena; artifacts and their compensation; vascular and cardiac imaging; instrumentation and equipment; MR safety; contrast agents in MR imaging; and functional imaging techniques. What distinguishes this book from other books that deal with the basics of MR are the excellent graphics, the frequent interposition of what the authors call "Learning Points," the use of bullet-like information, a section at the end of the chapters entitled "Questions" (answers are supplied at the end of the book), and a glossary of terms and abbreviations used in MR. The illustrative material (drawings, graphs, charts) is the most clear and crisp of any book I have seen dealing with the fundamentals of MR. In Dr. Westbrook's lectures, she uses many of these aides to drive home important points. It is certain that this book would be of great value to trainees starting out in MR imaging (residents/fellows), to MR technologists, and to any physician who wants a clear, understandable and concise review of MR physics. The book is highly recommended.