Book reviews

Neuropharmacology of Serotonin. Edited by A Richard Green. (Pp 436; £25.00.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

When Oxford University Press approached Richard Green to edit a monograph on the neuropharmacology of serotonin they could not have made a more appropriate choice. An acknowledged expert in this field, Richard Green in turn selected a group of specialists to cover a number of current areas of interest in serotonin research. No attempt was made to cover all aspects of the neuropharmacology of serotonin. This approach was perfectly correct and the choice of topics has coalesced into a balanced work of scholarship. Although some will disagree with the areas covered I found the volume of enormous interest and one I shall refer to for many years to come.

The volume starts appropriately with a description of drugs altering serotonin synthesis and metabolism and then proceeds to describe the nature and properties of pre- and post-synaptic 5HT receptors and the second messenger systems. Subsequent chapters deal with the role of 5HT in depression, anxiety and the actions of hallucinogens. Means of assessing brain serotonin activity by electrophysiological techniques and by *in vivo* voltametry are eloquently described. Richard Green together with David Heal provide a detailed evaluation of serotonin mediated behaviours with respect to 5HT receptor subtypes. Finally, the editor optimistically reviews current serotonin research and its clinical implications and looks forward to many further advances. I will in turn, look forward to a subsequent volume which hopefully will keep me well briefed in this exciting field. Overall, a volume I will recommend to my students and colleagues and one for which libraries will find great demand.

P JENNER

Study Guide and Self-Examination Review for Core Text of Neuroanatomy. 3rd Ed. By Malcolm B Carpenter. (Pp 181; £14.00.) London: Williams & Wilkins, 1985.

This guide contains over 1000 multiple choice questions on neuroanatomy, all linked and cross-referenced to the recently revised Core Text of Neuroanatomy by Professor Carpenter. Answers are given at the

end of each chapter with a brief comment and direction to the appropriate page or diagram in the Core Text.

A particularly nice feature is the inclusion of diagrams and photomicrographs as a basis for some questions; this makes for welcome relief in a rather daunting task. One does not read multiple choice questions for pleasure, of course, but for the serious student, and for teachers at all levels, this volume will be a boon. Clinicians wishing to review their neuroanatomy could do no better than use this as a basis for revision and updating.

This is a slim volume, and the price is perhaps a little high, but one cannot begrudge this in view of the value of the contents.

NIGEL LEIGH

Studies in Neuropsychology. Selected Papers of Arthur Benton. Edited by Louis Costa and Otfried Spreen. (Pp 350; £36.00.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Arthur Benton has a long and very distinguished career in neuropsychology. During the last 50 years or so he has published more than 200 papers and this book brings together 27 of them, together with 2 previously unpublished studies. In addition it includes a comprehensive bibliography for those who may wish to research Benton's work more thoroughly.

This volume is by no means a general neuropsychology text. But it was never intended to be one. However, it contains representative works of Benton on several clinical conditions and it includes related empirical studies and methodological issues in the field. Those who seek detailed microanalysis of most neuropsychological syndromes and exhaustive test batteries will not find them here. Is there a need for such a volume? I think the answer to this question should be an emphatic "yes". Benton has been a most prolific writer in the speciality of neuropsychology and his work has been amongst the best and least known. He has published in diverse sources which are not always easily accessible and yet, I believe, his contributions merit close examination by all workers in the field. Of course, reading some papers which were written 20 years ago or so may not be one's idea of becoming informed in a particular scientific endeavour. Nevertheless Benton has always formulated a clear statement of what was previously known about the correlates and determinants of a condition and most of his statements are as

valid today as when they were first published.

The book is divided into nine sections. The range of topics is fairly wide, addressing problem areas such as *Aphasia, Cerebral Localization and Hemispheric Dominance, Constructional Apraxia and Spatial Abilities, The Gerstmann Syndrome, Developmental Neuropsychology and Approaches to Clinical Methodology*. Benton's approach to his topics is characteristically "evolutional". That is, he gives authoritative reviews of the development of concepts, reflecting on both theoretical and empirical issues and drawing his conclusions with acumen and clarity. One may or may not necessarily agree with all his conclusions but the reader is easily able to follow his line of argument and knows the basis for his inferences. In addition his critical reviews highlight the pitfalls many clinicians and investigators may fall into.

It is difficult to select individual topics of special interest and each reader will find certain papers of particular interest. All papers are followed by comprehensive lists of references and the author makes good use of them in the text. The writing is always intelligible, succinct and coherent in style and one is left with a valuable collection of factual material with little, if any, repetition. The book is well produced.

All in all, this is a very good supplementary neuropsychology volume and it is recommended to psychologists, neuropsychologists and neurologists. It is generally an excellent distillate of neuropsychological knowledge in selective areas with a great deal to offer both to the relatively novice and the experienced clinicians and researchers alike.

LUKE KARTSOUNIS

Diagnostic Tests in Neurology: A Photographic Guide to Bedside Techniques. By E Wayne Massey, A Bernard Pleet and Barbara J Schekokman. (Pp 144; £14.50.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc. UK Distrib: Blackwell Scientific, 1985.

The authors describe this paperback as a photographic guide to bedside examination techniques and state it is based on Dr Robert Wartenberg's *Diagnostic Tests in Neurology*. Certainly his name features more than thirty times in the 130 pages. The format follows a familiar pattern with chapters on history taking, examination of mental status, the cranial nerves, pyramidal, extra-