
This volume records a symposium that took place in Jerusalem in August 1984. It provides, in camera-ready format, 8 chapters on channels and transporters, 7 chapters on calcium and transmitter release, 9 chapters on calcium and exocytosis, 7 chapters on calcium-dependent mechanisms and 12 "free communications". The discussion following each contribution is reported. A very distinguished group of physiologists participated in this meeting and the volume conveys the atmosphere of an effective workshop with much discussion of technical matters and welcome periods of speculation.

The emphasis throughout is on electrophysiological approaches and mathematical modelling. Thus several papers discuss the influence of [Ca++] on potassium currents and others develop the ideas of Dodge and Rahamimoff on the cooperative interaction of Ca++ at a receptor triggering quantal release. There is no discussion of the molecular biology of the relevant receptors and ionophore. There are very little pharmacological data presented. Chapters by Robert DeLorenzo and colleagues and by Jonathan Pincus describe the effects of benzodiazepines and phenytoin on synaptosomal calcium fluxes and the possible significance of this in anticonvulsant actions. Calcium entry blockers are not presented in any detail. (They have been very adequately reviewed in several recent volumes). The role of calcium in epilepsy is not considered, but this has been the subject of a recent volume edited by Speckmann, Schulze & Walden. There is very little material relating to the role of calcium as a metabolic regulator and none concerning its role in excitotoxicity.

This volume could be of value to doctoral and post-doctoral workers in the field of calcium and neurotransmitter release, particularly those who were unable to attend the symposium. It provides for them a convenient contact with key issues and personalities. With the widespread availability of colour copiers, video tapes, floppy discs and desk top publishing surely we should be able to devise faster and more economical methods of achieving this goal?

BS MELDRUM


Conference proceedings are big business, an established branch of modern medical publishing. Nowadays the product looks like a textbook although of course the contents belong in the journals. Personally I see no harm in this deception (lamb being dressed up as mutton, so to speak) provided that the customer realises what he is buying.

This book is a selection of the papers presented in Amsterdam in September 1985 at the 13th Congress of the European Society of Neuroradiology. It is an almost emotive declaration of the state of the art, documenting the remarkable expansion of neuroradiology and indicating that the name itself is now a nomenclature, "neuro-imaging" being the more appropriate title. The subject matter of the 50 papers underlines this fact: magnetic resonance imaging 19; investigative radiology, 14; ultrasound and Doppler studies, 5; computed tomography, 4; digital angiography, 2; positron emission tomography, 2; myelography, and so on, and so on. It is remarkable to see how rapidly has been the progress in all new directions, that only five of the 50 papers would have been presented if this congress had taken place 15 years ago.

Many of the technical papers involve neuroradiologists (that is, neuro-imagers) only, such as details of operating digital vascular apparatus and scanners including data collection and choosing substances and catheters for transluminal angioplasty and stent occlusion. However, the wider diagnostic and therapeutic options offered by the newer methods are bound to interest neurologists and neurosurgeons, particularly the diagnosis by CT and MR imaging and the treatment by chemonucleolysis of prolapsed intervertebral discs; the obliteration of surgically inaccessible arteriovenous malformations by the balloon technique; and the demonstration of a wider range of complications of cerebrovascular accidents by MR imaging.

The papers dealing with magnetic resonance help to breach the pre-MR mysteries surrounding the white-matter of the brain, the brainstem and cerebellum, and the spinal cord. There is something for everyone in George du Boulay's classification of white matter diseases and his attempt to analyse the causes of the MR appearances of abnormal areas of the brain.

EH BURROWS


This book is written by an educationalist and a psychologist, and describes their experiences in paediatric rehabilitation in the Kennedy Institute for Handicapped Children in Baltimore, Maryland. It contains a critical review of the authors' experience in attempting to return severely head-injured children to school, and as such, it is first rate.

MARTIN ROSSER