

has been set at a level which will enable many students to purchase their own copy: they will be getting good value for their money.

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Borna Disease. H. KOPROWSKI, W. I. LIPKIN, eds. Pp. 134. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 1995. DM 150.00; öS 1,170.00; sFR 144.00. ISBN 3-540-57388-7.

This slim volume (number 190 in the Current Topics in Microbiology and Immunology series) is a timely monograph on an emerging disease of increasing importance. Although Borna disease was first described more than 200 years ago as a fatal neurological disease of horses, it is only relatively recently that major progress has been made in our understanding of the disease itself and the virus that is the aetiological agent. Progress continues apace, and the confirmation that Borna Disease Virus is present in human patients with certain psychiatric diseases should lead to a further increase in research effort. This will inevitably mean that this monograph will rapidly become outdated. Indeed, apart from the recent work on human psychiatric disease, cloning and sequencing of the viral genome, and visualization of the virions by EM (which all get an honourable mention as Notes Added in Proof) progress has already overtaken the monograph with the identification of a Borna-specific glycoprotein, gp18. This is not a criticism of the monograph, just a fact of life in the fast lane of research: indeed everyone concerned with the production of the volume is to be congratulated for its immediacy.

The monograph is presented in seven chapters, the first covering molecular biology of the virus which, in view of the recent flood of new data and ongoing work, is doomed to early obsolescence. Nevertheless it is, like the rest of the book, well-written, well-edited and well-referenced. There follow chapters on natural and experimental infections in animals, and the recently described disease in ostriches. The next three chapters detail the neuropathology and pathogenesis, immunopathogenesis, and behavioural disturbances and pharmacology. The final chapter describes the evidence for the role of Borna Disease Virus in various clinical syndromes in man.

This monograph is ideal reference material for anybody already working in the field, and for those wishing to begin working in the field. It should also be of interest to virologists in general and to those interested in human central nervous system diseases. The monograph would have benefited from colour reproduction, particularly for some of the illustrations in the Neuropathology and Pathogenesis chapter, but this would have added to the already horrendous cost of this book. I will regularly be dipping into my complimentary copy.

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Guidelines for Standards in Laboratory Practice in Medical Microbiology, publication no. 3. S. MEHTAR, ed. Pp. 30. St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex: Association of Medical Microbiologists, 1994, £10.00.

Research, the subject of this journal, is about what it is right to do and audit about doing it right. Standards therefore evolve from research, are relevant to all readers, and are essential for audit. The Association of Medical Microbiologists are to be congratulated on trying to produce standards in the heartland of clinical microbiology. Anyone who writes gold-standards (or perhaps in the cash-strapped NHS it should be brass-standards) needs to be sure that they represent the best (or an acknowledged deviation from the best) rather than what is 'usually' done or what is personally acceptable to the authors. Every microbiology audit group should perhaps now audit their practise against these standards, and report if they consider the standards are wrong. Health care purchasers will not go far wrong now if they adopt the highlighted standards. I hope the standards will be provided on (two sides of) A4 as a check list that can be given to the purchaser.