BOOK REVIEW

Greenfield’s Neuropathology, Ninth Edition: 2-Volume Set

Seth Love, Herbert Budka, James Ironside, Arie Perry, Editors
1961 pages; book + e-book, $695.00

A new edition of Greenfield’s marks a milestone in the life of a neuropathologist. The ninth edition is a complete and up-to-date (with citations to 2014) compendium of our ever-advancing and increasingly complex discipline. Having at hand a source that encompasses the entire field is essential for practicing neuropathologists and for teachers and students of the biology of neurologic diseases. The field has progressed significantly in all aspects since the eighth edition of 2008, particularly with respect to the understanding of molecular pathogenesis of many neurodegenerative and genetic diseases and the subclassification of tumors. This evolution is reflected in the additions (e.g. of neuroimaging correlations, tables, and diagrams), “reorganization,” and “restraint,” which, in their Preface to this 2-volume version, the editors indicate were necessary. There now are 46 chapters (vs. the previous 24), with the increase largely a result of dividing the ever-expanding field of neoplasms into discrete chapters, as well as reconfiguring other topics. The 78 authors of this edition have done an admirable job in retaining and incorporating the previous with new material for readers of today and the immediate future.

If one compares page by page, chapter by chapter this edition with its predecessor, several additional differences are apparent. The Index is now in both volumes, a considerable additional convenience. The font of each of the chapter bibliographies is smaller, thereby packing in more references with proportionately less weight, a not inconsiderable factor in view of the 14-lb (6.3-kg) weight of the aggregate. In addition to the increase in photo figures, it is also apparent that a large number of the photos from previous editions have been greatly improved—better color and contrast, no doubt with the judicious use of Photoshop or a similar program. I am also optimistic that the binding will stay in shape longer than that of my 2008 volumes.

With instant electronic access to much of the literature, one has to ask whether the hefty price, (and weight, at least of the hardcover volumes), still makes sense. It is clear that the organization and distillation of the information provided herein cannot be obtained by rapid searches through PubMed; and the new e-book version will maximize portability. The future of neuropathology will continue to be enhanced from the guidance and companionship of Greenfield’s; this authoritative edition is still essential for our time.

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