

Media and Book Reviews

READING EEGs: A PRACTICAL APPROACH

by L. John Greenfield, James D. Geyer, and Paul R. Carney, Kindle edition, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2011, \$75.99

There are many great books about EEG out there. This is one of them. It was written to give residents and fellows an introduction to reading EEGs and practical applications thereof. The first 7 chapters of this book are relevant to neurology residents in general. There, one finds a thoughtful, sequential approach to developing EEG skills as well as how to diagnose important conditions based on EEG criteria, seizure semiology, or both. Chapters 8 and onwards are a well-organized introduction to more advanced topics relevant to aspiring or new fellows. Chapters 13 and 14 delve deep into topics at the forefront of research, complete with advanced equations.

Every few pages one finds a well-written multiple-choice question that helps to consolidate the information. There are many quality figures that illustrate the points made throughout the book. As facts are presented, references are cited, thus providing the reader a direction for further study. This ebook also includes access to 4 video examples of seizures.

There are several advantages to having an electronic version of this text. It is portable (fits in a shirt pocket), fully searchable (instant access to helpful facts and figures), and available on multiple devices (smartphones, ereaders, tablets, and PCs). Even more helpful, the ebook can “live” simultaneously on multiple devices.

Conversely, there are a few technical limitations to keep in mind. First, it does matter which device you plan to use. If you have an e-ink style device (such as the Kindle Touch) you will have easy reading but the images will remain fairly small, and perhaps will be harder to review. Other devices will permit pinch-zooming into the images if needed. If

you use any device that cannot view flash-enabled video (including e-ink-based readers, iPhones, iPads), you will not be able to watch the video examples (but calling the publisher will get you access codes to watch the video on a computer). Second, the hyperlinks are nearly, but not quite, accurate. For instance, if you click on figure 3, it will jump to the figure legend, not the figure. If you click on reference 25, all the references will mysteriously be jumbled together without numbers, but you will arrive to the generally correct reference. Also, this book seems to have been rather hastily ported to electronic format, resulting in a very large number of simple typos such as hyphenating words that do-n’t need to be, and a few places where words are connected together.

Taken as a whole, the book does help introduce and clarify a number of simple, intermediate, and advanced topics in EEG, epilepsy, and neurophysiology. I cannot recommend this as the sole book for the novice EEG reader—I would not expect one to become a proficient reader with this book alone because it emphasizes understanding more than rapid pattern recognition. Other books might be significantly shorter and get one “up and running” faster (for instance, *Primer of EEG* by Rowan¹), but they will provide less depth. As is usually the case, residents and fellows will likely need this and other books. I think that with that in mind, and the technical considerations (both pro and con), this textbook is a worthwhile addition to one’s digital bookshelf.

Reviewed by Daniel Goldenholz, MD

Dr. Goldenholz serves on the editorial team for the *Neurology*[®] Resident & Fellow Section. **Go to Neurology.org for full disclosures.**

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REFERENCE

1. Rowan AJ, Tolunsky E. *Primer of EEG: With a Mini-Atlas*, 1e. Philadelphia: Butterworth Heinemann; 2003.

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Daniel Goldenholz

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