

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND AUDIOVISUAL AIDS

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Review Editor

**Clinical Skin Microbiology**, Raza Aly and Howard Maibach, Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Illinois, 1978 (133 pp, \$14.50, 50 illustrations)

The authors have attempted the difficult task of bridging the void between the worlds of Dermatology and Microbiology. This necessarily required a simplification of both subjects in order to make the book useful in both disciplines. Thus the clinical dermatologist will find the clinical aspects relatively unrewarding but will undoubtedly derive much enlightenment from the microbiology. The converse is likely to be true for microbiologists.

The book contains 2 good chapters on basic laboratory methods, one on normal flora, and 3 on cutaneous viral infections. The chapters on *Actinomyces*, *Corynebacteria* and *Mycobacteria* are excellent. The sections on *Staphylococci* and *Streptococci* are marred by confusion over the etiology of "impetigo" which is listed under both organisms, and there is a notable lack of attention given to common community infections, which are predominantly streptococcal.

The chapter on gram negative bacteria covers most of the pathogens likely to infect the skin. The color plates are excellent.

Skin infections are a significant part of dermatological practice, and accurate diagnosis often depends on cultures. I particularly applaud the emphasis on appropriate primary isolation techniques, for which the clinician and nurse are usually responsible.

For those who wish to know more about the other half of the clinical/laboratory team, this book is recommended, and long overdue.

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**Les Affections Dermatologiques en O.R.L. et Reparations Plastiques des Pertes de Substances Cutanees de la Face**, Edited by P. Fleury et al, Librairie Arnette, Paris, France 3 vol, 627 pp, 300 Fr)

These 3 paperbacks seemed to have much going against them. They are written in French, using the rich, often unknown (to Americans) terminology and classification of French dermatology; considering the sad state of the American dollar, they are expensive; they are written for the most part by a team of French otolaryngologists and deal with cutaneous disease. Even their dermatologist colleagues who first were approached by the authors smiled skeptically about the undertaking. Yet the result is an extremely well written, clear, conservative, and needed review of the dermatological aspects of otolaryngology.

The authors review the cutaneous aspects of diseases of the head, neck, and mucosae, using a plethora of eponyms which, for the dermatologist, should cause no difficulty. The first of the three volumes consists of text, the second is an atlas, the third is a concise, clear guide to the surgical management of destructive lesions of the face. The text is well balanced with fuller treatment accorded the commoner disorders, such as basal cell epitheliomas. The French have a penchant for "splitting." This results in a complex topographic classification which may confuse some readers but can offer unexpected moments of gallic imagery. For example, the authors have classified cavernous hemangiomas into numerous types, including the "Cyrano" angioma and the "Tapir" angioma, topographic involvements of the tip of the nose and upper lip.

Although much of the material contained in these pages will seem familiar, there is ample discussion of the unusual and interest for the dermatologist, such as lipomas of the tongue, malignant embryonic tumors of the head and neck, dental sinuses, thyroglossal, laterocervical cysts and fistulae, branchial arch malformations, and their preauricular pits and tags. The management sections at times offer unfamiliar medication but for the most part are conservative and sensible. The concepts concerning pathophysiology and discussions of etiology throughout are current and free of dogma.

I enjoyed reading this text and recommend it highly to both dermatologists and otolaryngologists who can read French.

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**Sexually-Transmitted Diseases**, Robert C. Noble, Medical Examination Publishing Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1979 (166 pp, \$8)

In the introduction of the book, *Sexually-Transmitted Diseases*, the author states the book is written for physicians, house staff, and clinical personnel, and I feel he has written a valuable book for these groups of people. It is not an in-depth textbook, but a ready, convenient, and complete source for the medical person evaluating a patient with a sexually-transmitted disease (STD). All practical, necessary information is contained in the book for the basic evaluation and treatment of patients with STD's, but an adequate bibliography is also included for additional, more in-depth reading.

The contents cover the field of STD's adequately, but it might have been valuable to spend some time discussing the importance of the asymptomatic form of gonorrhea in both the male, as well as the female. This point is mentioned, but not emphasized.

Photographs are included, but are in black and white and some of the skin lesions are not well depicted without the use of color plates.

I feel the book is a valuable source for the office practitioner who may see an occasional patient with an STD, but it will also be of particular value to medical assistance and paramedical personnel who work with patients with STD's. Its size and soft cover make it a convenient book to carry with the individual in clinic work. This book is a valuable addition to the medical literature.

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**UV-A: Biological Effects of Ultraviolet Radiation with Emphasis on Human Response to Longwave Ultraviolet**, John A. Parrish, R. Rox Anderson, Frederick Urbach, and Donald Pitts, New York, Plenum Press, 1978, (262 pp, \$25)

At last there is a book devoted to the biological effects of UV-A, an unjustly neglected portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. Although UV-A is invisible to the eye and relatively ineffective in producing erythema of the skin, it may have important cellular effects. UV-A emphasizes the biological effects of longwavelength ultraviolet radiation on the skin and the eyes and includes practical chapters on sources of UV-A, radiometry, therapeutic uses of UV-A and safety measures to protect against dangerous UV exposure.

In this thin book the authors have managed to review virtually all the important observations concerning the biological effects of UV-A. The references are extensive (almost 700 cited) and include important early studies of 40 to 50 years ago. The book includes numerous useful figures from the literature (such as transmission characteristics of optical filters, of human skin, and of the eye) as well as original contributions (relative importance of UV-A in sunburning; diagrammatic presentation of the depth of penetration of different wavelengths into the skin. There are lucid explanations ranging from why the sky is blue to why the Wood's lamp can differentiate epidermal from dermal pigmentation.

Despite the overall excellence of this book, there are some jarring inconsistencies. The style of writing shifts drastically between chapters. In contrast to the extensive references for most chapters, the difficult topic of UV-A measurement is presented in telegraphic form with no references. Specific identification of materials which can be used for filtering of radiation in experiments are listed including manufacturer and catalogue number. However, names of commercially available sunglasses which offer adequate UV protection for the eyes of the experimenter (such as NoIR, by Recreations Innovations, South Lyon, MI.) are not stated.

This book represents the coming of age for the study of UV-A. The authors have carefully defined the limits of present knowledge of UV-A and thereby indicate areas where future investigation is needed. Their observation that "the scientist... must be willing to admit that being asked to be an authority [on UV-A] does not, by definition, ... increase one's base of information," is well taken.

UV-A deserves a place beside *The Biologic Effects of Ultraviolet Radiation and Sunlight and Man* as a standard reference for studies of ultraviolet photobiology.

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