

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND AUDIOVISUAL AIDS

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Review Editor

**Chemical and Physical Behavior of Human Hair**, Clarence R. Robbins, Ph.D. Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 135 W 50th St, New York 10020, 1979 (227 p)

This interesting, highly technical text is primarily a literature review of the chemical and physical behavior of human hair. It consists of 8 chapters; Morphological and Macromolecular Structure, Chemical Composition, Reactions of Reducing Agents, Bleaching Human Hair, The Interactions of Shampoo and Creme Rinse Ingredients with Hair, Dyeing Human Hair, Polymer and Polymer Chemistry in Hair Products and Physical Properties and Cosmetic Behavior of Hair. The subjects are discussed throughout the book with chemical structures, chemical and mathematical equations, graphs and tables. It is well documented with a valuable reference list at the end of each chapter although there are very few patent references. A 4 page Appendix contains pertinent data.

The book discusses the thermodynamic equilibria of interactions between keratin fiber and various chemical agents used in the cosmetic care and treatment of hair. The chapter on Dyeing Human Hair is rather superficial. The treatment of oxidation dye chemistry is adequate but there is no discussion of the physical, and possibly chemical, interactions of oxidation dyes and dye precursors with hair except for a brief comment in the last chapter. Also absent is any review of direct dyeing systems which include nitro dyes, disperse dyes and anthraquinone dye. These dyes are an essential component of the widely distributed semipermanent hair dyes.

The chapter on Polymers and Polymer Chemistry in Hair Products is especially relevant because polymers are becoming increasingly important in cosmetic products for the hair. The author takes on such fascinating subjects as the binding of polymers to hair and in situ polymerization of monomers in hair.

The chapter on The Physical Properties and Cosmetic Behavior of Hair includes data on changes in hair after permanent waving and bleaching. It would appear that this material should have been included in the chapters on reducing agents and bleaching.

In spite of its shortcomings, it is a worthwhile text for those scientists engaged in research and development of cosmetic products for the care and treatment of hair.

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**Dermatology in Internal Medicine**, Dr. Sam Schuster. Oxford University Press, 1978.

*Dermatology in Internal Medicine* is conceived by Dr. Schuster to be a short introduction to Dermatology for the postgraduate in other specialties as well as for the beginning Dermatology resident. The book is designed to provide a brief overview to a complex field. This has been done in less than 300 pages by eliminating illustrations and markedly shortening descriptive sections.

The book is divided into 15 chapters. It begins with a general introduction to cutaneous biology and presents a conceptual framework developed by Dr. Schuster for understanding the basis of "rashes." The remainder of the book is devoted to diseases which are primarily cutaneous as well as to those which are manifestations of underlying medical illness. The order of the chapters could have been better planned. Except at the beginning of the book there is little flow from one segment to the next. A large section on cutaneous manifestations of internal disease is wedged between descriptions of primarily cutaneous diseases.

The book is extremely well written and a pleasure to read. Its lack of illustrations, however, is a major drawback. After all, Dermatology is primarily a visual specialty. A compendium atlas of photographs and photomicrographs, organized in parallel with the text, would be a useful addition. This would avoid adding unnecessarily to the size and expense of the text itself and yet at the same time it would provide the visual reinforcement that is clearly required by the groups to which he is aiming this text.

While Dr. Schuster's book does provide a cognitive overview it fails

in practical applicability. There is a dearth of information regarding dermatologic therapy. A chapter early on in the text with information as to basic therapy and more elaborate descriptions in the body of the text itself would add inestimably to the value of the work. This could be done without adding substantially to the size of the book.

The book was up to date and the various chapters were extremely well organized. Other than the defects described above, Dr. Schuster has succeeded admirably well in accomplishing his aims.

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**Histologic Diagnosis of Inflammatory Skin Disease**, A. B. Ackerman, Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1978 (863 pages, 674 illustrations, \$84.50).

The diagnosis of inflammatory dermatoses is often difficult, since the beginner student in dermatopathology does not know where and how to approach the slide cut from a biopsy specimen. In this book Dr. Ackerman offers his highly individualized method of diagnosis of inflammatory dermatoses, which may be particularly helpful for pathologists and first-year residents in dermatology.

Dr. Ackerman views inflammatory dermatoses as resulting in patterns and considers the location of the infiltrate in the skin as the presenting sign to aid in the diagnosis. In elaborating his use of the pattern method and its application, the author presents methods used by most dermatopathologists to diagnose their particular problems, but this book has systematized this method as a didactic approach. Nowhere have I seen this didactic approach used in a textbook of dermatopathology. For the practiced individual the result may appear too elementary, but no one will disagree with the need for such a text.

When considering most texts, a global judgment is more effective after considering the virtues and flaws in the book. The things that seem to make it an effective, helpful, and interesting text include the following:

There are fine clinical-pathologic correlations given for many of the diseases discussed, a system well familiar to the pathologist, who should be pleased to see this used in this textbook. Immunofluorescent findings are added to the standard descriptions, which help the reader visualize more fully the disease under discussion. Dr. Ackerman uses an unusual system for classifying some entities which remain puzzles and vivid descriptions such as "itchy red bump disease," "granulomatous slack skin disease," etc. Dr. Ackerman bravely admits that there are certain inevitable handicaps in the diagnosis of skin disease and points to areas where he is unsure of himself. We have certain diseases rarely discussed in such texts, such as striae distensae portrayed in different stages in illustrations. There are beautiful descriptions of some rare parasitic diseases, such as creeping eruption and cercarial dermatitis. Some original and, I believe, accurate descriptions are included, such as the separation found at different levels of the epidermis in pemphigus vulgaris, rather than the single suprabasal cleavage usually described.

Some aspects of this text appear to me to be flaws, and they are as follows:

The book is extremely large (9 x 12 inches) and therefore does not fit on most shelves, and it is very heavy to hold. There are few references. Therefore, the interpretation of histologic findings and the pathogenesis of the diseases discussed are entirely from the author's point of view. For example, his claim that many cases of "lymphomatoid papillomatosis" are in reality examples of pityriasis lichenoides varioliformis. In the chapter on blistering diseases the author invites the reader to form his own conclusions on certain issues, certainly a unique device for certain conditions and histologic features which overlap with others. This limits the usefulness of any systematic approach, but Dr. Ackerman is honest in admitting this without hedging. Almost as much time has to be spent on learning the basic materials presented.

Finally, Dr. Ackerman's vivid personal approach is mirrored in the

picture images he uses for describing the pictures he sees, e.g., "spaghetti and meatballs," "franks and beans," "copper pennies," "potato chips," "sparkling burgundy sign," "teardrop shaped dermal papillae," "diced elastic fibers." For the literate this would add to the book. For those more concerned about scientific accuracy this may detract from the book. I liked it.

This text is original, concise, well illustrated, and highly readable. Every pathologist interested in dermatopathology should own one, it must find its place into the library of every dermatology department.

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