A large number of color atlases have been published in the recent past and many more in the Year Book Medical Publishers series are yet to come. Seven atlases are reviewed below.

In general, the quality of the pictures and color reproduction in all of the works are high. Their organization, accuracy of the legends and text, and the ease of reading are more open to criticism. Several atlases have fallen prey to the sin of including pictures of many rare conditions while omitting illustrations of more common clinical entities.

Atlases can be valuable teaching and learning aids to both neophytes and more skilled clinicians. The recent proliferation of this category of book puts us, the consumers, in the enviable position of being able, indeed obliged, to carefully choose the appropriate book from among many high-quality volumes now available.


The *Pocket Color Atlas of Dermatology* is a small-pocket sized (12 x 19 cm) picture book and minibook containing 302 color illustrations and printed on highly reflective paper. This work is an abridged edition of Frieboes and Schonfeld’s *Color Atlas of Dermatology* (1966). The authors’ intent was to develop the visual diagnostic skills of younger colleagues and to keep established dermatologists’ diagnostic abilities at a high level.

Included in the 218 pages are 80 pages of text, 7 of references and index, and 131 of pictures and legends. The book is organized into 22 sections based on criteria of morphology (e.g., Macular Eruptions, Erythrodermas); anatomy (e.g., Diseases of Corium, Tongue, Skin Appendages), and disease types (e.g., Infectious, Hereditary). Each section starts with a discussion of the various diseases and is followed directly by pictures of many of the entities described. This arrangement leads, unfortunately, to a great amount of page-flipping from text to picture and back again.

The *Pocket Color Atlas* contains a large number of superb photographs, many of them pertaining to not commonly seen conditions. Color correction and reproduction are excellent. There are only a few deficiencies: the rendition of scarlet fever (#3) shows no discernable eruption, that of atopic dermatitis (#45) is taken from too far away to see the disease, and those of pityriasis rubra pilaris (#36) and mycosis fungoides (#164) are out of focus. The text discusses several entities which do not have accompanying pictures. Included among these are some more-common diseases such as pediculosis, pemphigoid, xanthelasma, and lentigo.

The *Pocket Color Atlas* contains a large amount of textual material for such a small book. My prejudice in atlases is for fewer words and more pictures, or at least for fewer words, and that certainly would pertain to this book. The following points were not discussed and should have been included in any text published in 1975: exfoliative toxin and the relationship between staphylococcal infection and toxic epidermal necrolysis in children (p. 5), pemphigus neonatorum and Ritter’s disease (p. 47); the role of disseminated intravascular coagulation in purpura fulminans (p. 6); the existence of white spots and their importance in the early diagnosis of tuberous sclerosis (p. 100); complement abnormalities in Quincke’s edema (p. 117); and the presence and role of DNA repair abnormalities in xeroderma pigmentosum (p. 118).

Overall, the *Pocket Color Atlas* is an excellent compilation of clinical photographs of uncommon and common skin diseases. The recently reviewed (September 1974, *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology*) *Color Atlas of Dermatology* (G. M. Levine and D. C. Calnan, Year Book Medical Publishers, 1974) contains 164 more pictures, much less text, and is far easier to read because the text and legends are always on the page facing the photographs. The *Color Atlas of Dermatology* would be more useful to students and non-dermatologists and is currently the small-atlas-of-choice for that group; the *Pocket Color Atlas* contains information and illustrations on many of the more unusual dermatologic entities and would perhaps be more appropriate for the already initiated.

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