

## BOOK REVIEW

# *Advanced Laboratory Methods in Haematology*

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London: Edward Arnold Publishers (US Distributors, Oxford University Press, New York, NY); 2002: 452 pages

This multiauthored text should be viewed as the bible of laboratory hematology (or *haematology*, depending on which English-speaking country one resides in). The author list reads like the Who's Who of laboratory hematology and is composed largely of former and present members of the International Council for Standardization in Haematology (ISLH). Members of ISLH will recognize the names of many of the authors in this text as authorities in the field and frequent presenters at annual ISLH meetings. Hence the focus of the text is a summary of how best to perform and standardize all methods used in laboratory hematology. The completeness of the subject coverage is exemplified by the attention given to both manual methodologies (hematocrits, cell counts, and sedimentation rates) and newer technologies, such as flow cytometry and high-performance liquid chromatography. Another strength of this reference book is the total coverage of methodologies from cell counting to hemoglobinopathy evaluations to coagulation testing. The British and European influence of this text is evident in not only the spelling of *haematology* but also the incorporation of discussions on the clinical relevance of laboratory practice and practical advice on therapeutic monitoring, such as heparin therapy and anemia treatment. This incorporation of clinical relevance into laboratory practice makes this text a more complete reference than most clinical pathology publications from those countries that use the spelling *hematology*.

Are there any weaknesses in the publication? Sure, no publication is perfect. The book, published in 2002, has rare references cited from the same century, but this situation is not uncommon at a time when publishing houses seemingly fail to recognize that through electronic technology publishing can occur in minutes rather than years. There are redun-

dancies among the multiauthored chapters. At a quick glance one could conclude that this circumstance is a failure on the part of the editors, but this reviewer found it interesting to read how different authors approached the same issue with similar but slightly different conclusions. There is little in the way of discussion of molecular diagnostic techniques. However, this reviewer would argue that it is naive to look to a textbook, with its inherent delay in publication, to serve as a reference source for a rapidly evolving area of diagnostic medicine.

The most relevant question addressed by a book review is, "Who would benefit from the financial investment in such a publication?" This book should be added to the reference library of any medical technology program, clinical hematology (haematology) department, or clinical pathology department. It should be required reading for pathology residents interested in hematology, Registers in Haematology, and Fellows in Hematology or Haematology preparing for examinations. One could even see this book as a positive addition to the office or laboratory of every practicing clinical hematologist or haematologist. Does this text exceed the traditional texts of hematology or clinical pathology as a source of information on clinical laboratory hematology (haematology)? In the opinion of this reviewer, it does without a doubt! My only desire is that we in the English-speaking world agree on the correct way to spell the study of blood: *hematology* or *haematology*?

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