

referred to as "figures" in the text) demonstrate most of the important graptolite morphology and are the real strength of the book. Such features as details of the prosicula, metasicula, and crossing canals and other structures rarely preserved on most specimens are shown in splendid scanning electron micrographs. The book includes almost everything that is important for a general understanding of graptolites and with its fine illustrations will be useful for those who are instructing students or who are just collecting fossils.

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Approachable Immunology

Cellular and Molecular Immunology. ABUL K. ABBAS, ANDREW R. LICHTMAN, and JORDAN S. POBER. Saunders, Philadelphia, PA, 1991, xii, 417 pp., illus. Paper, \$26.95. Supplementary slide set, \$250.

The major challenge facing the immune system is similar to that faced by the writer of a textbook on the subject: a constantly changing environment. The last 10 years have seen an explosion in our knowledge of the workings of the immune system, with many of the mysteries of the complex cellular and molecular interactions finally beginning to be elucidated. This explosion of information has made it difficult to find an introductory textbook on immunology that is both up-to-date and of high quality. The publication of this book has solved that problem, at least for the near future.

The key attribute of this book is the clarity and conciseness with which it presents this complex and abstruse field. Text and figures are well coordinated, and the figures are outstanding, presenting the information clearly and simply but still conveying the essence of the experiments.

The text, comprising 19 chapters, is divided into four sections: Introduction to Immunology; Lymphocyte Specificity and Activation; Effector Mechanisms of Immune Responses; and Immunity in Defense and Disease. Each chapter has four to six subsections, including a summary and about a dozen key references. Informational boxes are included to provide important or noteworthy background information on diverse aspects of immunological research that are crucial for understanding modern immunology but that fall between the cracks in many courses. A sampling of the topics found in these boxes are CD-molecule nomenclature, hybridomas, transgenic mice, cytokine re-

ceptor families, and immunity to malaria. Another nice teaching aid is the availability of a moderately priced slide set of the figures from the book.

Aimed primarily at medical students, this comprehensive, balanced, and approachable presentation will provide both medical students and Ph.D. candidates with an excellent foundation in immunology. The book is not so comprehensive as to scare them off, but there is enough substance to convey an understanding and appreciation of the immune system. An essential but often missing component of immunology textbooks is the clear establishment of the connection between the immune system and clinical medicine. Section 4, which focuses on the role of the immune system in defense against pathogens and on diseases caused by abnormalities in the immune system, firmly establishes this link.

How does this book compare to those already in use? In my opinion, it is the best available textbook of immunology for medical and research-oriented graduate students. The popular *Essential Immunology* by Roitt, the seventh edition of which was published in 1991, is also thoroughly illustrated, but it is less comprehensive and is better suited for undergraduates. On the other hand, the excellent *Fundamental Immunology*, edited by William Paul, is very comprehensive, with each of the chapters written by a leading expert, but is more suitable for advanced students. *Molecular and Cellular Immunology* fills a gap between these two extremes. It is a scholarly work that gives substantive accounting of current immunology in a way that is ideally suited for a medical graduate student's first exposure to the subject.

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Books Received

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Sunsets, Twilights, and Evening Skies. Aden and Marjorie Meinel. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991. x, 163 pp., illus., + plates. \$44.50; paper, \$19.95. Reprint, 1983 ed.

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