Book Review

Atkinson B: *Atlas of Diagnostic Cytopathology* (2nd ed), 856 pp, Philadelphia, Saunders 2003 (\$249.00).

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Reviewing the second edition of Dr Atkinson's *Atlas of Diagnostic Cytopathology* gave me a flashback of old memories. It was one of my favorite books during my residency training and it was one of the books I used to study avidly during preparations for my cytopathology board examination. It was easy to read, comprehensive in nature and contained superb photomicrographs and illustrations.

The contents of the second edition reflect almost all the new advances in the science of aspiration and exfoliative cytology.

The book starts with an opening chapter describing general cytopathologic principles with explanations of technical issues, procedures, nomenclature definitions and signaling occasional misleading artefacts. Then the Atlas takes you on a systematic and smooth journey to all body organs, which includes complete chapters on ocular and orbital cytopathology. There is also a well-illustrated chapter about ancillary studies and their impor-

tance. This chapter elegantly addresses a large list of immunocytochemical stains available to date with tips for appropriate trouble-shooting. In addition, the author dedicates a separate chapter dealing with potential medicolegal problems, presenting real life examples.

Each chapter starts with an appropriate brief description of the topic followed by related tables and diagrams. Algorithms providing help approaching cases of daily practice are provided. The Atlas contains more than 1700 all-new colored illustrations with associated histologic correlates. Unfortunately, some of the colored photomicrographs suffer from suboptimal sharpness, color imbalance and other image deficiencies that do not equal the outstanding text and do not reflect the likely hard work performed to capture these images.

In summary, this book is a well-written, comprehensive, carefully organized and properly referenced atlas that covers most aspects of cytopathology. The excellent text, however, is not matched by the attributes of some of the microphotographs.

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