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## Book Review

**Graham DY, Genta RM, Dixon MF, editors: *Gastritis*, 272 pp, Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 1999 (\$165).**

A reference in my Oxford English Dictionary states that the term *gastritis* has been in the English language for almost 200 years. I could only guess what it meant to 19th-century physicians and their patients, but most likely it was nothing more than a synonym for other, similar terms, such as *gastralgia*, *gastrodynia* or *gastricism*, or *gastrocatarrhal fever*, which according to OED was the most common disease in Dublin in 1833.

Gastritis is probably as prevalent today as it was in the 19th century. In contrast to our professional predecessors, we know much more about this disease, primarily because of the widespread use of modern gastroscopic techniques. The discovery of *Helicobacter pylori* was another major step forward. New tests and new drugs were developed. But all that would have been for naught were it not for a persistent transcontinental effort of a group of dedicated clinicians and pathologists whose work is summarized in the present monograph.

The book comprises 20 chapters, which are grouped into six sections. The introductory chapters on normal anatomy and physiology are followed by chapters that deal with gastritis in general and specific forms of gastritis, as outlined in the Sidney classification and the 1994 Houston Workshop. “If gastritis is the title topic, *H. pylori* is the main character of this book,” to quote from the preface. For pathologists, it is worth a notice that the text is illustrated with very good color microphotographs and excellent commentaries about the fine diagnostic points for each entity. Altogether, this is an excellent, up-to-date, state-of-the-art summary about gastric biopsies in general and about gastritis in particular. For practicing hospital pathologist, for whom the gastric biopsies account for at least 10 to 15% of their daily workload, this book is a godsend that should not be forsaken. Residents in pathology and gastroenterology, as well as practicing gastroenterologists, should also have it on their shelves.

**Ivan Damjanov**

*University of Kansas School of Medicine  
Kansas City, Kansas*