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Book Review

Knowles DM, editor: *Neoplastic Hematopathology, Second Edition, 1957 pp, Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2001 (\$249.00).*

Perusing this rather heavy book is an onerous task, but it cannot be (even in jest) compared with the time and effort that the editor and his collaborators must have spent in compiling this encyclopedic work. On the other hand, it is probably the only way that the rapidly expanding field of hematopathology could be surveyed and presented to all those who are interested in finding out what is worth knowing at this point in time. I should also add that there are not too many pathologists besides Dan Knowles who could have done the editing of such a Henke-Lubarschian *Handbuch* for the new century.

As indicated in the title, the book deals with leukemias, lymphomas, and related diseases affecting the hematopoietic system. In addition to chapters dedicated to specific hematologic entities, there are also extensive descriptions of basic facts, such as normal hematopoiesis, special techniques currently used for diagnostic purposes (*e.g.*, flow cytometry or cytogenetics), and *de rigueur* classifications of lymphomas. It seems that the contributors have been encouraged by the editor to provide as comprehensive coverage as possible, and that most of them have followed literally those instructions and taken their assignments very seriously. To a general pathologist like me, the text was often overbearing, and often way above my head. On balance I should immediately add that there are also many easily accessible facts, diagnostic pearls, useful tables, and diagrams. Nevertheless, I still came away

with the impression that the book was primarily aimed at those who are practicing hematopathology much more intensely than this reviewer. This impression of mine was confirmed in discussions with a number of my hematopathology friends, almost all of whom had only compliments for the book. I also found out that some of them did not agree with all that was written in some of the chapters, especially those on lymphomas, but that is nothing more than the usual disagreement encountered in every rapidly expanding field of medicine. Furthermore, it would be impossible not to find some fault in a multi-authored book of this size. The positive remarks nevertheless outweighed heavily the negatives, and that was true at every level of expertise of my collocutors, which included among others hematologists, as well as pathologists, fellows, and residents.

From my readings and the discussion-based “field work,” I concluded that this rather complex book will be used mostly by hematopathologists and clinical hematologists/oncologists, their fellows, and residents. As a most comprehensive source of current information on neoplastic blood diseases, it should, however, appeal also to general diagnostic pathologists, and I foresee that many of us will be using the Knowles book in practice. I do not know of any other book that covers hematopathology in such a detailed way.

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