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Book Review

Ramzy I: Clinical Cytopathology and Aspiration Biopsy, Fundamental Principles and Practice, 2nd Edition, 619 pp, New York, McGraw-Hill, 2001 (\$199.00).

The growth of diagnostic cytopathology during the past two decades has lead to a plethora of books trying to meet the growing demand. It is easy to predict that most of these books will be forgotten soon and will never have a second edition. Those that survive in the overcrowded and highly competitive, but limited, market will do so only on their own merit and only because they have something that makes them unique and different from all others that have the same (or more or less similar) title.

The first edition of Dr. Ramzi's book appeared in 1990 and was favorably accepted. The fact that a second edition was commissioned indicates that the book was selling and that the readers liked it—there is still nothing like word-of-mouth recommendation from one user to another! For this reviewer, only marginally related to cytopathology, it is thus a challenge to figure out what makes this book so special as to justify a second edition.

My answers to this challenge are as follows: first of all, in 1990 this book was one of the pioneering efforts to explain the intricacies of cytopathology to pathologists in training and make it understandable (as well as acceptable) to old-timers with classical histopathologic backgrounds. Once the formula for a good book was discovered, it obviously took less time and effort to update it than to start from scratch. In this context it is worth mentioning that the original book was thoroughly revised and fully updated.

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Second, the book is true to its title: it deals with and masterfully presents the fundamental principles of cytopathology and shows how to use those principles in practice. Third, the author and his associates use histopathology as the springboard from which they interpret the cytologic manifestations of various diseases. In the same vein, tissue diagnosis is constantly used for final validation of its cytopathologic equivalent. Fourth, the book is just the right size-neither too big nor too small. The buyer has the feeling that he or she can read it in a reasonable period of time, such as a 2-month rotation in cytology. Fifth, the text, written in straightforward expository no-nonsense prose, is very readable. The didactic value of the well-chosen, high-quality color photographs used for the cytologichistopathologic correlations cannot be overemphasized. The tables summarizing the differential diagnostic points are well done and designed for practicing pathologists. Finally, it helps that the book is printed on high-quality paper and nicely designed. I am confident that the book will appeal to residents as well as practicing pathologists, but above all to instructors trying to introduce the principles of cytopathology to their students and show how this subspecialty of pathology is linked to other forms of microscopic and clinical diagnosis.

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