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Book Review

Emory TS, Carpenter HA, Gostout CJ, Sobin LH: *Atlas of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy & Endoscopic Biopsies*, 448 pp, Washington, DC, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, 1999 (\$90.00).

Like many other hospital pathologists, I got used to receiving biopsies without too many clinical data. And then one day last year our gastroenterologists started sending us not only copies of their endoscopic findings but also photographs of what they saw at the other end of the tube. In the meanwhile, having personally seen how such an ‘improved communication’ between clinicians and pathologists had benefited several patients, I became convinced that correlating ‘their’ and ‘our’ pictures was not only the best way of dealing with intestinal lesions, but the only way that I would recommend to anybody practicing this diagnostic art.

The present book is a wonderful example how the virtual ‘divide’ between the endoscopists and pathologists could and should be bridged. Based on the material culled from the files of the Mayo Clinic and the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, it is a comprehensive primer for both pathologists and gastroenterologists entering the field. It covers all the major entities, illustrating them with high-quality photographs taken through the endoscope or the microscope. The pictures are most informative, well-chosen, and of high quality. The text that

accompanies the pictures is succinct and to the point, complementing and enhancing the educational value of the pictorial material.

Instead of criticism, I am including a few suggestions for revision in the second edition, which I am sure will be coming out in not so distant future. To improve the didactic value of the pictures, I would annotate them or insert markings. This would help pathologists understand better the endoscopic photographs, and I am sure that the clinicians would not object to some assistance in interpreting the microphotographs. Furthermore, I would replace some of the endoscopic photos that show too much reflected light. Some entities have only endoscopic pictures and should be illustrated with equivalent microphotographs. The index also could be a bit more detailed and user friendly, and could include some alternative names if not even some ‘jargon terms’ from both sides of the clinicopathologic divide.

By all accounts this is a well-done (pun not intended!) G.I. book. At the current price it is a bargain that should not be bypassed by pathologists or gastroenterologists. It should serve them well on their tortuous route through the alimentary tract.

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