BOOK REVIEW


Readers familiar with John Judd’s Handbook of Serological Techniques for Use in Investigative Immunohematology can only be grateful that he has taken the time and trouble to update and improve this useful volume and to shorten its title. Here at last, in a simple format, is a comprehensive list of blood bank procedures useful for problem solving. It includes everything from routine procedures to research methods such as monocyte assays and enzyme-linked antiglobulin tests.

The book is divided into 14 sections that include procedures for antibody identification, the use of enzymes, elutions, the investigation of autoantibodies, and drug-induced antibodies. There are sections on high-titer, low-avidity antibodies, hemolytic disease of the newborn, ABO typing problems, polyagglutination, micromethods, the use of cell separation techniques, reagent preparation and storage, and a miscellaneous section of unusual procedures that would, at the very least, allow the blood banker to determine if and when he or she would need to use these special techniques. There is also a useful directory for equipment, supplies, and reagents.

Each section begins with introductory remarks, and each step-by-step procedure includes its primary application, materials needed, interpretation, and notes. There is also suggested reading and some references, although the references, in most cases, do not refer to any specific area of the text.

Anyone who has labored over a procedure manual cannot help but appreciate the detail and thorough nature of this manual. The methods described in it are, of course, not the only possible ones, but they are methods that are used by workers with extensive experience.

There are a number of useful charts and tables, especially the ones on the serologic characteristics of blood group antibodies, the selection of antigen-negative blood, and a list of drugs associated with drug-induced hemolytic anemia. Some of the procedures refer the user back to earlier procedures, but given the nature of blood bank methods, this is understandable and does save space. The ring binding and cover are appropriate for a book that is designed to be used at the bench. The computer-printed typeface is a little hard to read, but this has allowed a very useful book to be published rapidly and at a reasonable cost.

To an experienced technologist, this book would be a useful how-to manual; however, as the author warns, the book is not a detailed treatise on blood group serology; the novice problem solver would do well to use the listed references at the end of each section as well as to pay particular attention to the “Interpretation” and “Notes” sections. Blood bank educators should not feel that the book is too detailed for their students even though its very comprehensiveness is overwhelming. It should remain an up-to-date resource for blood bankers for many years to come.

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