This book is organized into pertinent sections: “Pathogens,” “Innate Immunity,” “Acquired Immunity,” “Pathology” and “Immune Evasion.” Each of these sections is divided into chapters that discuss bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses. Other chapters interspersed in the sections describe aspects of immunology that are pertinent to the topics of microbial immunity, including mucosal immunology, the Th1-Th2 paradigm, immunogenetics, and evolution of anti-infective immunity. The discussion of topics in these chapters is extensive and more than adequate to attain the stated goal of this book: “to review not the monologues of, but the dialogue between pathogens and the host immune system” (p. xi). The editors are to be commended on the selection of chapter authors; all are noted experts in their selected fields and, therefore, should have access to and knowledge of the most up-to-date information for their chapters.

The repeated pattern of chapters in each section (each of which deals, in turn, with bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses) makes for a very systematic discussion of topics but, by its very structure, gives rise to much inherent redundancy that might have been corrected with some judicious editing. One instance is in the set of chapters on innate immunity. Innate immune functions for each set of microbes can be similar, and the discussion of many of these functions is repeated in each chapter: for example, there are 3 sections devoted specifically to complement. It would have been advantageous if there were a single section that discussed complement and complement-mediated functions associated with innate and acquired immunity, to which other chapters referred. Therefore, the book lacks consistency and may appear to be, essentially, separate review articles covering the topic announced in the title of each. This is not to say that this is a fatal flaw, because there is much significant information in each chapter, but, if a book is to be put together in such a fashion, coherence between chapters would be advantageous.

There is no mention for what group of readers the book is written. Many post-doctoral fellows and new investigators in the fields of microbiology, microbial pathogenesis, and infectious diseases would find this book helpful for quickly getting up-to-date in the various topics discussed. In addition, graduate students in microbial pathogenesis and immunology could take advantage of the information in this book to supplement their course work and research. However, many established investigators in the field might find this book slightly rudimentary, especially the basic immunology chapters.

There are 2 other drawbacks to this book that decrease its usefulness. There is a distinct lack of figures that would enhance the descriptions in the text. There are only 11 color figures included in the book. There are a few black and white figures included in most chapters, but a few chapters have no figures. This decreases the usefulness of the book as a reference that investigators can quickly consult for pertinent information and understanding. In addition, although this book was published this year, there are some subject areas about which up-to-date information is lacking. For example, pattern recognition receptors, TLRs, and Nod1, which are extremely important, are discussed on only 3 pages in total. TLRs have been shown to be essential in initiating innate immune responses to a large variety of pathogens, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses, and they also have been shown to be a link between innate and acquired immune responses to these pathogens. Pattern recognition of pathogen structures and its relationship to immune responses to these pathogens would seem to be an essential point of this book; therefore, the relative paucity of discussion about this topic is disappointing. Even with the lead time needed for publication of a book of this type, there is still much newer information regarding TLRs and the relationship to immune responses to pathogens that should have been included.

Overall, this is a fine book that can be

**Immunology of Infectious Diseases**

Edited by Stefan H. E. Kaufmann, Alan Sher, and Rafi Ahmed


This new collection discusses the interactions between microbial pathogens and pathogenic mechanisms and host immunity towards these pathogens. This is an extremely timely topic, and the information contained in this book highly justifies its publication. During the past decade, the knowledge gathered regarding the immunobiologic characteristics of microbes has grown exponentially. This is especially true with respect to our recently improved understanding of innate immune activation by pathogens due to interactions with specific pattern-recognition receptors (Toll-like receptors [TLRs] and Nod1).
helpful to new investigators in the fields of infectious diseases and immunity to pathogens. A second edition that addresses some of the shortcomings of this book would be greatly anticipated, because the topics discussed are timely and extremely relevant.

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New Books Received


