
Book Review

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Antimicrobial Drug Resistance. Edited by D. L. Mayers, S. A. Lerner, M. Oullette, J. D. Sobel. (Pp. 1369, €189.95/£173/US\$269, ISBN 978-1-58829-405-0.) Springer 2009.

In their Preface, the editors state that they wanted to produce ‘a comprehensive resource of information on antimicrobial drug resistance [...] for bacteria, fungi, protozoa and viruses’. I am aware of no other books that have sought to address this topic so extensively. So, what have they done and have they succeeded?

The book is presented in two large-format volumes of about 650 pages, collectively containing 91 chapters divided between 13 sections. Volume 1, *Mechanisms of Drug Resistance* includes: General Overview (4 chapters), General Mechanisms of Drug Resistance (7 chapters), Bacterial Drug Resistance – Mechanisms (13 chapters), Fungal Drug Resistance – Mechanisms (5 chapters), Viral Drug Resistance – Mechanisms (9 chapters), Parasitic Drug Resistance – Mechanisms (8 chapters). Volume 2, *Clinical and Epidemiological Aspects* covers: Gram-Positive Bacterial Drug Resistance – Clinical (5 chapters), Gram-Negative Bacterial Drug Resistance – Clinical (12 chapters), Fungal Drug Resistance – Clinical (5 chapters), Viral Drug Resistance – Clinical (4 chapters), Parasitic Drug Resistance – Clinical (6 chapters), Measurements of Drug Resistance (8 chapters), Public Health Issues of Drug Resistance

(5 chapters). There are tables and black-and-white figures throughout, with a section of colour plates in volume 1.

It has clearly taken several years to compile this book, and this is reflected in reference lists, which are extensive and found at the end of each chapter. Most chapters cite primary literature up to 2005–2006, although a few cite more recent papers; I found one citation of the 2009 CLSI guidelines, but several citations for earlier versions, which has potential to cause confusion if cross-referring between chapters. With any book of this size, it is possible to find faults (broken links in the chapter on internet resources, for example), but the overall quality of the work is clear. The information is presented clearly and the style is very readable, which will encourage the reader to ‘dip in’ regularly.

One ‘con’ is the price, which will be prohibitive for many individuals (although either volume may be purchased separately), but this is unlikely to stop the book from becoming widely used as a standard text for antimicrobial resistance. In my view it should be found in any institutional or departmental library that has medical microbiology or antibiotics coverage. It deserves a place alongside well-established volumes that focus on antibiotics themselves or on clinical microbiology; the detailed information to be found in this book is complementary rather than duplicative. The editors and the panel of 175 international experts who contributed to *Antimicrobial Drug Resistance* are to be commended on their impressive achievements. I am sure that my copy is destined rapidly to become well-worn.

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