Clinical Virology,
3rd Edition
Edited by D. D. Richman, R. J. Whitley, and F. G. Hayden
Washington, DC: ASM Press, 2009. 1408 pp, Illustrated. $259.59 (hardcover).

The 3rd edition of this highly successful virology textbook was published in 2009. It is found in many clinical virology departments and is commonly used by trainees. The aim of the authors “to inform scientist and health care professionals about the medically relevant aspects of this rapidly evolving field” is more than achieved. The book is divided into 2 major sections and consists of 57 chapters. The international authorship ensures that the most up-to-date information is presented, and the use of a common template, particularly for the agent-specific chapters, makes accessing the material significantly easier.

The first section provides a good overview of viral infections and how they relate to specific organ systems. The respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous system infection chapters are particularly interesting, as they set the diagnosis of a viral infection into a clinical context providing the most up-to-date information on how a clinical diagnosis is made. Despite it being a rapidly changing field, the chapter on the important area of viral infections after transplantation provided an up-to-date summary. Other areas covered included skin infections and viral myocarditis. The latter could have been expanded to cover pericarditis and atherosclerotic diseases. The remaining chapters deal with more general topics relevant to medical virology, including antivirals, diagnostics, immune responses, and gene therapy. Two chapters are devoted to antiviral agents. The first deals with antiretroviral agents; it is a comprehensive review not only of the drugs in current use but also of those that are nearing approval. The classes of drugs are organized according to the stage of the replication cycle they inhibit, starting with the entry inhibitors (fusion and CCR5 inhibitors). The development of each class is described, and the pharmacology of all the currently used agents is described. For each, the mechanism and significance of underlying resistance is also explored. In the second of the antiviral chapters, drugs with activity against the herpes viruses, hepatitis B and C, and respiratory viruses are covered. Much of the complex data is clarified in a series of comprehensive well-referenced tables. The area of diagnostics has been fundamental to establishing virology as a modern clinical discipline. This chapter goes through the past and present diagnostic techniques, explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the molecular methods currently available.

The second section deals with the individual agents. The DNA viruses are followed by RNA viruses, with nonviral transmissible agents comprising the final chapter. The information in each chapter is well laid out, and for each virus there is a satisfactory review of the genomic structure and how it relates both to the clinical features and epidemiology. With our increasing awareness of the importance of zoonotic transmission of viruses, it is difficult to cover all the potential threats from animal viruses as well. This book includes an entire chapter on zoonotic paramyxoviruses, which globally are significant causes of human morbidity and mortality. The newer coronaviruses are only discussed briefly in the coronavirus chapter; in future editions, a chapter devoted to the newer respiratory pathogens may be a useful addition. Inset in the middle of the book are a number of color plates, illustrating both clinical conditions, diagnostic techniques, and viral structure.

In summary, the 3rd edition of Clinical Virology is a valuable resource for medical and scientific staff working in the fields of clinical virology.

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Infectious Disease in the Aging:
A Clinical Handbook
Edited by Thomas T. Yoshikawa and Dean C. Norman
New York, NY: Humana Press, 2009. 519 pp. $189.00 (hardcover).

To edit a book on the intersection of 2 medical subspecialties calls for mastery of both fields. If Clinical Infectious Diseases is the only blue journal to which you subscribe, you may not know that Thomas T. Yoshikawa is the editor of the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. He has also edited Acute Emergencies and Critical Care of the Geriatric Patient (with Dr Norman), Antibiotic Therapy for Geriatric Patients (with Shobita Rajagopalan, who contributed the chapter on "Infections in Diabetics" in the book reviewed here), and Infection Management for Geriatrics in Long-Term Care Facilities (with Joseph G. Ouslander).

If you are old enough to be a patient in a chapter from Yoshikawa and Norman, you may have studied Latin in high school. Perhaps you can even read the following fragment of Hippocratic sagacity, trans-