

*Book Reviews**Proteins of Iron Storage and Transport*

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This book reports the plenary lectures and some of the other presentations at the 7th International Conference on Proteins of Iron Metabolism, held in France on 30th June–5th July 1985. It has thus been published commendably quickly, although at the expense of using camera-ready presentation without retyping of the manuscripts submitted. This has resulted in ugly differences in typeface in several places in the book.

There are eight sections, devoted to transferrin structure, ferritin structure and function, receptors and cellular iron metabolism, iron-binding proteins in myelopoiesis, bacterial iron metabolism, iron absorption, iron overload and molecular biology. Each section contains one or more plenary lectures, which mostly give a broad overview of the recent developments in the area and are correspondingly valuable. It is clear that the 'weak spot' in our understanding is the poor knowledge of the intracellular mobile iron pool. The large presentations are followed by a selection of other, shorter, presentations. On the whole, I found these unsatisfactory in that they are mostly abbreviated versions of scientific papers that are already in the literature, or probably soon will be. The most serious flaw in the book is that no attempt has been made to present the discussions that took place at the meeting, especially when one reads a brief account of data that seem inconsistent with the generally accepted mechanism for cellular unloading of iron from transferrin (page 175). Discussion is the most important part of any meeting, and no proceedings volume is complete without it.

Overall, I have mixed feelings about this book. The plenary lectures give a useful overview, but the other information can be found from the scientific literature. Reading the book is no substitute for having attended the conference. At a cost of more than 18 cents (13 pence) per page, the book seems poor value for its limited usefulness.

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