

Book Reviews

Chemistry and Pharmacology of Anticancer Drugs. By David E. Thurston. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL. 2007. xviii + 290 pp. 16 × 24 cm. ISBN 3-7643-7055-6. \$159.95.

I was initially skeptical about this new book. For the past 17 years I have taught a graduate course in cancer chemotherapy, and I still rely on the 1994 second edition of William Pratt's *The Anticancer Drugs*, with supplementation, for the chemistry and basic pharmacological mechanisms of action. Until now, I have not been able to find what I consider to be a concise introduction to selective toxicity and various classes of anticancer agents.

This book, which I believe should be considered for use as a text rather than as a supplemental resource for those doing research in the area, is concise and to the point while still managing to cover a wide range of anticancer drugs, relevant pharmacology, cancer treatment, and the discovery of new targets in just under a total of 300 pages. Needless to say, one's first assumption is likely to be that something has been overlooked, especially when comparing this text to a treatise like Foye's hefty 1995 *Cancer Chemotherapeutic Agents*, which was even written before the surge of information associated with the development of targeted anticancer agents after the molecular

biology revolution. In actuality it is not so much that this new book is lacking in content but rather that the author condensed a myriad of information down to the useful/necessary facts while eliminating redundancies and wordy introductions.

The book is appropriately indexed and referenced for an introductory text. I have two somewhat trivial complaints, the first being the lack of color plates with figures such as molecular models of anticancer agents binding with protein targets, and the second a complaint, resulting from years of reviewing manuscripts, that sizes of the chemical structures vary throughout the text. Otherwise, I conclude that this text is a gem for any graduate student in the pharmaceutical sciences or for anyone seeking an introductory reference in the area of anticancer drugs.

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