

## Book Review of A History of Medicinal Chemistry

**A History of Medicinal Chemistry.** By William A. Remers. Clarice Publications, Tucson, AZ. 2011. vii + 874 pp. 21.5 × 27.5 cm. ISBN 0-9677940-1-3 (Paperback). \$70.00.

This reviewer is unaware of any previous publication of a definitive, exhaustive history of the field of medicinal chemistry; this commodious volume seems to be the first. The first several chapters of the book describe the beginnings of pharmacotherapy in China, Greece, and Rome, and then they proceed to outline beginnings and development of relevant branches of chemistry and pharmacology from the earliest times until post World War II. The birth and growth of the pharmaceutical industry are presented, and the fruits of these early companies' efforts are cited.

The major portion of the volume is divided into chapters in which currently used drugs are classified according to pharmacotherapeutic use. A massive number of these agents is addressed, describing (inter alia) drug design strategies, synthetic aspects, stereochemistry, pharmacology and relevant physiology, and metabolism. Description of the discovery and development of these drugs includes crediting the participation of the research chemists, biologists, and clinicians who brought their collaborative efforts to fruition. Many potential readers will doubtless be familiar with the details of discovery of some of the agents discussed, but the scope of the volume is such that there will be much material that is unfamiliar even to veteran medicinal chemists. Later chapters in the book address newer strategies applicable to medicinal chemistry/drug discovery, such as computer based drug design, chemoinformatics, QSAR, and pharmacogenomics. A chapter reviews the pharmaceutical industry as it exists now and presents brief discussions of most of the larger companies, both domestic and overseas.

The book is well-written and is very readable. This reviewer found that it was difficult to put down once he began reading it. It is remarkably well referenced. The retail price is relatively modest and I recommend it as an enjoyable (and informative) addition to the medicinal chemist's library. Additionally, medicinal chemistry graduate students will find the book to be a treasure trove of information about their chosen profession. One might even invoke the term "inspirational".

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