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### A review of: "Practical Immunoassay, The State of the Art. Wilfrid R. Butt, Ed. Marcel Dekker Inc., N.Y. pp 318. \$55.00

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BOOK REVIEW

Practical Immunoassay, The State of the Art. Wilfrid R. Butt, Ed.  
Marcel Dekker Inc., N.Y. pp 318. \$55.00

It is 25 years since Ekins, and Yalow and Berson invented immunoassay. Hundreds of monographs and countless papers later, one might ask whether anything new remained to be said. In fact, notable advances in this versatile technique continue to be made and Practical Immunoassay, The State of the Art, encompasses most of them. This is the fourth monograph that deals with aspects of immunoassay in the 'Clinical and Biochemical Analysis' series edited by Morton K. Schwartz. Practical Immunoassay is edited by Wilfrid R. Butt and is based in part on a meeting in Birmingham, England. All but one of the authors come from the United Kingdom, but the coverage is eclectic. Enzyme, fluorescent, chemiluminescent and nephelometric immunoassays are each treated in separate chapters with a uniform editorial balance that starts with basic principles and proceeds to consideration of practical aspects and details of commercial instrumentation. The detail of the presentation of principles is appropriate to the operator with a basic science background, providing sufficient insight for intelligent expectations and applications of the techniques which range from the familiar isotopes and enzymes to the exotic time-resolved fluorescence and chemiluminescence. Only the burgeoning fluorescence polarization technique is notable by its absence.

Practical aspects are also stressed in a helpful chapter on Problems of Iodination by Wilfrid Butt and in one on Monoclonal Antibodies by Noel Ling and Royston Jefferis, also from Birmingham. Stuart Woodhead and his colleagues from Cardiff provide a lucid account of Labelled Antibody Immunoassays, and Roger Ekins gives a comprehensive theoretical and practical treatment of Free Hormones in Blood.

The final chapter must stand alone as perhaps the first user friendly mathematical treatment of immunoassay theory. A quite outstanding account by R P Channing Rodgers, now at the Department of Laboratory Medicine in San Francisco, entitled 'Data Analysis and Quality Control of Assays: A Practical Primer', this alone must be reason enough for any serious worker in this field to obtain this book.

This is altogether a very practical treatment, well balanced, and up to date. References are generally current to 1982. There is a comprehensive index. Although printed in camera-ready format with unjustified right margins, the text has all been typed using the same typeface and is easily legible without obvious errors and without that disconcerting change in layout and type that so often mar this production style. I recommend it highly.

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