Biopsy Pathology in Colorectal Disease


In the late 1980s, I was fortunate enough to purchase the first edition of *Biopsy Pathology in Colorectal Disease*, then authored by I. C. Talbot and A. B. Price and published as part of the *Biopsy Pathology Series*. I remember as an apprentice gastrointestinal pathologist cherishing the clear style and diagnostic pearls provided by the authors. During the years, I have frequently boasted to colleagues and trainees that I had in my possession the best biopsy book of colorectal pathology ever written!

This was until I received the second edition of this great title, now published by Hodder Arnold, with the addition of a third coauthor, Dr Manuel Salto-Tellez.

Under a slightly larger format and a handful more pages, this second edition replicates and improves on the quality of the 1987 edition. The same basic structure is preserved, with great opening chapters: “Normal Features” and “Assessment of Abnormalities,” in which the authors systematically review each mucosal component and critically evaluate their utility in reaching a diagnosis in the setting of pathology.

A total of 20 chapters exhaustively cover the entire biopsy pathology of the colorectal mucosa and anus. Although numerous chapters/sections are similar to the previous edition, several welcome additions include, for example, chapter 7, “Ileoanal Punch Pathology”; chapter 9, “Microscopic Colitis”; and chapter 11, “Iatrogenic Diseases.”

In addition to extended coverage, keeping with advances in the field, the *ouvrage* offers a completely new iconography, with color pictures cover to cover. Most illustrations are of good quality, with the exception of a few low-power views. A slight deception, though, is the limited number of endoscopic pictures. Another minor criticism is that the font size has been slightly decreased. The eyesight of this reviewer has not improved since the 1987 edition; the font size may be strenuous to the reader.

A cardinal element of this masterpiece is the presentation of diagnostic pearls, allowing the authors to share with us the angst and limitations sometimes associated with the evaluation of biopsy material, even if one is well versed in the diagnostic criteria.

In conclusion, this book is a must-keep and a worthy successor to the first edition, which sits proudly next to it on my shelves. I wish only that each segment of the gastrointestinal tract could get such a devoted textbook. One would hope that all surgical pathologists, whether practitioner or academic, residents or fellows, would read this superb publication.

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