

## Book Review

***Making Medicines – A Brief History of Pharmacy and Pharmaceuticals.*** Stuart Anderson, ed., ISBN # 0-85369-597-0, 318 pages, Hardcover, Pharmaceutical Press, Grayslake, IL, 2005

I have always been interested in the history of pharmacy and the origin of pharmaceuticals. Editor Stuart Anderson and all the contributing authors made *'Making Medicines – A Brief History of Pharmacy and Pharmaceuticals'* an interesting and informative account of how the profession of pharmacy originated and more so how "pharmaceuticals" came to be. The book's first chapter was dense, with much detail. It seemed the author was trying to include a great deal of content. Once I completed the first chapter, however, I was pleasantly surprised in the subsequent chapters to learn about the origins of "medicine-making" as it related to each time period.

Perhaps one of the more interesting and informative chapters was Chapter 10 – "From Alkaloids to Gene Therapy: A Brief History of Drug Discovery in the 20th Century." The research for this chapter was indisputably time-intensive for the respective author and I imagine the information could be helpful in an introduction to pharmacy course for first-year pharmacy students, or perhaps even for students in an undergraduate history course.

It was also refreshing to get a glimpse of history of hospital pharmacy, an area of pharmacy which is oftentimes overlooked from an historical point of view. So often we hear of chemists and "druggists" and "apothecaries" as being the birthplace of pharmacy innovation. It was nice to read that hospital pharmacists were not taken out of the text's account.

I found Box 12.1 in Chapter 12 entitled "Major Legislation Concerning Quality of Medicines, 1450–1970" particularly worthy of note. It was a wonderful quick guide. The section on "quack remedies" in the same chapter was humorous and quick witted. A quote worthy of mentioning due to its descriptive nature: "People in desperate circumstances were exploited, succumbing

to the guile of a quack" (page 229). I wish this section was longer – it is a topic usually discussed in the capacity of physician but rarely pertains to the pharmacist. I found the content very entertaining and believe it would be just that for students at any level of curricular advancement. I personally found the color plates interesting and enjoyed them very much. In fact, all of the photos were attractive, especially those of early community pharmacy storefronts in Europe (pages 123–125).

I thought the section in Chapter 13, "Development of Medicines Legislation in the USA," was written from a unique point of view. Nonetheless, it was important to address the thalidomide tragedy as it is an extremely important topic pertaining to legislation and drug safety regulations, as it was a milestone in the history of pharmacy.

Chapter 6 ("The Development of Pharmaceutical Education") and Chapter 14 ("Representation, Regulation and Recognition: Pharmacy in Britain, 1986 to 2004") may not peak the curiosity of pharmacy students in the United States. On that note, bear in mind that there is some terminology that may need explaining, i.e., "US\$7000 million" (page 168) and further clarification on how European policy is made (also in Chapter 6).

Overall this book would be an interesting read for the public, students, and those who want to find more about the history of pharmacy (i.e., history majors). I must acknowledge the amount of time and research put into this text by the contributing authors. Although the title of the text suggested it was a "brief" history, it was clear to me that an extensive amount of information was compiled through many different resources. That should not go unnoticed. In addition, the referenced material was thorough and comprehensive.

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