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Book Review

Cases in Human Parasitology
by Judith S Heelan
ASM Press, Washington DC: 2004
ISBN 1-55581-296-1
Paperback: 243 pp, $59.95

Not since Reifsnyder's *Parasitic Diseases Case Studies* (1980) has a book of parasitic disease case studies been published. A welcomed edition, Heelan's *Cases in Human Parasitology* includes cases of emerging, as well as classical parasites, along with wonderfully colored photomicrographs of the organisms in question. As stated in the introduction, the purpose of the book is to "present cases solely involving parasites to supplement conventional textbooks in human parasitology and to provide an interesting and educational challenge to health care scientists." The book contains 62 cases of patients who presented to an emergency department or to their physician with symptoms of a parasitic infection.

The book is divided into five sections: Intestinal Protozoa; Blood and Tissue Protozoa; Cestodes, Trematodes, and Intestinal Nematodes; Blood and Tissue Nematodes; and Challenging Cases. The latter section also includes some infections in patients with symptoms closely resembling parasitic infection. A glossary is also available at the end of the book. Each section is preceded by a concisely written introduction of background information and ends with a reference list. Each case includes a brief presentation of pertinent patient history appropriate to the infection—travel history, symptoms, age of patient, season, and characteristics of the organism in question, accompanied by a photomicrograph. The history is followed by a list of questions suggesting topics discussed in a comprehensive parasitic textbook; such as, identification, epidemiology, treatment, life cycle, transmission, prevention, and control. The question section is followed by concise answers.

This would be an ideal book for use in a human/medical parasitology course whether for clinical laboratory science students, medical students, infectious disease residents, clinical pathology residents, or even biology undergraduates. It could easily be adapted because its sectional organization is similar to that of most parasitology courses. Since many health curricula include case-based approach, Heelan's text would be an excellent tool for such. Individuals preparing for national examinations should also find *Cases in Human Parasitology* an excellent means for reviewing the topic. I highly recommend the book.

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