

## BOOK REVIEW

**Cronobiología Básica y Clínica**, edited by Juan A. Madrid and Angeles Rol de Lama, Editec @ Red, Madrid, Spain, 2006, 860 pp.

*Cronobiología Básica y Clínica* is the most comprehensive book thus far devoted to the field of chronobiology written in Spanish. The editors are to be congratulated for the effort they expended in producing it. This 860-page, 26-chapter volume by no means should be considered an introductory text to chronobiology; it is a detailed (perhaps too much so) and sometimes redundant account of research especially useful to specialists in the field chronobiology. Indeed, it would be hard reading for those whose interest in chronobiology is only peripheral.

After an introductory chapter on biologic clocks, the next three chapters present a detailed discussion on the collection and analysis of data in rhythm studies. The subsequent three chapters deal with the physiological and molecular basis of central and peripheral clocks. The following two chapters present particular aspects, such as light contamination in modern society and circadian rhythms in neurotransmitters. In the next four chapters, the sleep/wake cycle and the ontogeny and aging of the circadian apparatus are analyzed in detail, followed by the description of circadian rhythms in the endocrine system, gastrointestinal tract, nutrition, metabolism, and antioxidant defense and blood components. The concepts of chronopharmacology, chronotoxicology, and chronotherapy are then explored, and these chapters are followed by three more devoted to clinically relevant accounts of rhythms in normal and diseased respiratory, cardiovascular, and renal systems. The very important subject of circadian rhythms and cancer is covered in one chapter. The last three chapters of the book are devoted to the discussion of rhythms in physical and cognitive performance, psychiatric disease, shift work, and jet-lag.

It is impossible in a multi-author book like this one to avoid redundancy, and, indeed, this often emerges. Notwithstanding, the editors have made a great effort to give homogeneity to the book by introducing a section on “Chronobiology in the Street” in advance to every chapter in which they relate its content by asking key scientists in the field to recount his/her fundamental discoveries. The two principal protagonists

of the development of the field, Pittendrigh and Aschoff, are also given appropriate recognition. Each chapter concludes with a concise summary and a series of challenging study questions to help focus one’s mind on the topics that are discussed in such great detail.

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