

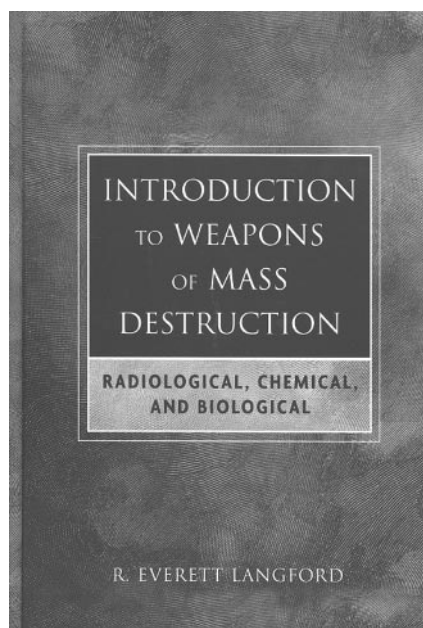
will not help address most of these opportunities.

Fred D. Lasky

*Genzyme Diagnostics
Regulatory Affairs
Cambridge, MA 02139*

DOI: 10.1373/clinchem.2005.047910

Introduction to Weapons of Mass Destruction: Radiological, Chemical, and Biological. R. Everett Langford. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Interscience; John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004, 410 pp., \$89.95, hardcover. ISBN 0-471-46560-7.



This book was intended to develop a badly needed resource for the first-responder community. The purpose, as stated in the preface, is to "be both a textbook for those new to the subject as well as a summary reference to the more experienced practitioner. The goal is to provide clear, technically accurate, concise information to the public, industrial hygiene and other safety professionals, first responders, and writers in the news media." The book is divided into three sections dealing with three different weapon types: nuclear, biolog-

ical, and chemical warfare agents. The text is intended to provide both a basic reference for the general public and a summary for the experienced practitioner. Information is presented in basic language interspersed with technical presentation and little translation for newcomers to the field.

This review began with great expectations that were quickly quenched. A concise reference providing the aforementioned information is a worthy undertaking. Unfortunately, this book does not accomplish its objectives. Conflicting statements occur early and often in the text, and although the preface mentions the use of general and unconfirmed references, the author must be responsible for the accuracy and consistency of his text. The book would also benefit greatly from solid technical references tied directly to statements made.

One might excuse typographical or translational errors, such as 200 meters equated to 65 feet; however, conflicting statements are harder to accept. Errors abound; on pages 91 and 92, two different dates are given for the same event, and on pages 63 and 101, conflicting information is provided regarding underwater nuclear detonations. The discussion of the well-publicized mailed anthrax attacks in the United States in the autumn of 2001 omits some key details and contains factual errors.

The text also contains misleading statements on treatment. Contrary to statements on page 157, high-dose intravenous antibiotics have been used successfully and have cured people when therapy was initiated after the onset of anthrax symptoms. If antibiotic therapy has been initiated after a possible exposure to anthrax spores and the patient remains asymptomatic, vaccination is recommended before discontinuing antibiotic therapy. If a patient with anthrax symptoms (disease) has been successfully treated with antibiotics, vaccination is neither necessary nor recommended.

Inconsistencies and inaccuracies occur with sufficient frequency throughout the text to limit the con-

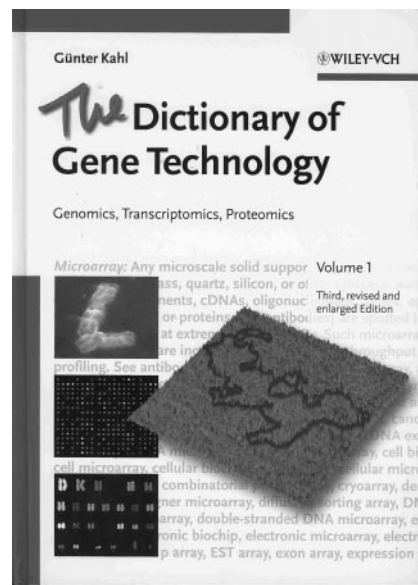
fidence with which the reader can use the information contained therein for decisions that include public health and safety. Because of these problems and others, I do not feel that this text fulfills the stated purpose and cannot recommend it.

Jim Pearson

*Division of Consolidated
Laboratory Services
Richmond, VA 23219*

DOI: 10.1373/clinchem.2004.033555

The Dictionary of Gene Technology: Genomics, Transcriptomics, Proteomics, Third, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Volumes 1 and 2. Günter Kahl. Weinheim, Federal Republic of Germany: Wiley-VCH Verlag GmbH & Co. KGaA, 2004, 1292 pp., \$230.00, cloth. ISBN 3527307656.



This is a comprehensive dictionary containing a total of 9000 technical terms commonly used in molecular biology, genetics, genomics, proteomics, biotechnology, and other modern life sciences. With 2500 more entries more than its previous edi-