

## BOOK REVIEW

H. L. Taylor,<sup>1</sup> M.D.

### A Review of *Disputed Paternity*

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**REFERENCE:** Bryant, N. J., *Disputed Paternity: The Value and Application of Blood Tests*, Brian C. Decker, a Division of Thieme-Stratton, Inc., New York, 1980, 185 pages, \$24.00.

Mr. Bryant's book, as stated in the preface, is "to simplify much of the medical 'jargon' and the mystery of the blood tests" for lawyers to provide the basic material necessary and for medical persons to provide "methods, pitfalls and ramifications" in paternity testing. In this, the author has succeeded. His text is simplistic, elementary, and shallow.

Fifteen chapters and two appendixes divided into three parts—"Inheritance," "Blood as a Forensic Indicator," and "Legal Aspects"—are all flawed by incomplete exposition, inadequate references, incorrect word usage (for example, "provide . . . pitfalls"; "medical pathologist"), and incomplete or absent current nomenclature. Charts, graphs, and statistical tables are used with little or no acknowledgment of their source. The content of the section on inheritance is written below the undergraduate level. The absence of mention of chain of custody in the legal section clearly indicates lack of knowledge of judicial Rules of Evidence.

We who have interests in this rapidly expanding, complex medicolegal area have become accustomed to a number of excellent informative texts and monographs during the last five years. These include Dr. Polesky's *Paternity Testing*, published by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists in 1975; Dr. Sussman's *Paternity Testing by Blood Grouping*, published by Thomas in 1976; the elegant "Forensische Paternitätsfragen" from Professor Prokop and Göhler's *Forensischemedizin*, published by Gustave Fischer Verlag in 1976; and the American Association of Blood Bank's publication, *Paternity Testing*, edited by Dr. Silver in 1978, which includes an impressive array of contributors who have interests in this subject.

If one in either the legal profession or a medical discipline involved in paternity jurisprudence or testing were to use *Disputed Paternity* as his sole reference source, I fear that he would find himself in deep water, over his head from lack of concise and reliable information. If the author's intent is "to provide . . . pitfalls" for "medical pathologists," I can certainly do without his "objective" advice concerning the "mystery" of paternity tests. I hope that other responsible people in law, medicine, and technology who are involved in these matters are as equally discriminating.

<sup>1</sup>Medical director, North Jersey Blood Center, 45 South Grove St., East Orange, N.J. 07018.