BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: Human Skeletal Anatomy Laboratory Manual and Workbook

Courses in human osteology and skeletal biology vary widely in scope and focus from institution to institution. Course content depends on the specific goals of the instructor, the degree program and topical concentration of the department, and associated courses taught within the curriculum. Therefore, no text in skeletal anatomy perfectly suits the needs of every instructor. The alternative is multiple texts, usually some combination of Bass (1987), White and Folkens (2000), Steele and Bramblett (1988), or Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994).

Scott Fairgrieve and Tracy Oost have provided us with the best alternative to multiple texts—a laboratory manual and workbook that, when used in conjunction with a single text, provides the instructor with a structured format for skeletal anatomy labs, including testing exercises, lists of important terms, and a guide to “laboratory research reports.” Similar to other laboratory workbooks, such as Wolfe and Lieberman’s (1990) Physical Anthropology Laboratory Textbook, this lab manual was designed over several years around a specific course, in this case, Laurentian University’s course in Human Skeletal Biology. These types of courses necessarily have a strong laboratory component. However, up to now, we are not aware of the existence of a laboratory workbook dedicated exclusively to coursework in human osteology. The text is similar in approach to Bass’ manual. The authors take a regional approach, but cleverly introduce the less complicated bones first. The text begins with a survey of both microscopic and macroscopic bone structure, and then switches to gross morphological anatomy of skeletal elements. Each lab assignment, broken into modules of increasing difficulty, has a “stated purpose with clear instructions of expectations and learning objectives”. Instructors are invited to utilize as much or as little of the manual as required. In fact, this type of flexibility is central to the appeal of this workbook. The general layout permits the instructor to move around in the manual, using chapters out of sequence.

Strong points of the volume include a sound introduction to bone histology and morphology that provides a good foundation for those unfamiliar with osteology. The discussion at the beginning of each section is helpful in orienting the student to key topics, particularly the chapters on teeth and non-metric variation. An attractive feature is the testing component, which includes fill-in-the-

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