

Contents

Introduction	1
1 Direct Observations	3
1.1 The Predominance of Biofilms in Natural and Engineered Ecosystems	5
1.2 The Architecture of Biofilms	13
1.2.1 Tertiary Structures Formed Within the Matrices of Biofilms	27
1.3 Dynamics of Biofilms	34
1.3.1 Bacterial Attachment to Surfaces	36
1.3.2 The Biofilm Phenotype	43
1.3.3 Recruitment into Biofilms	50
1.3.4 Detachment from Biofilms	53
1.4 Resistance of Biofilms to Stress	56
1.4.1 Resistance of Biofilms to Antibacterial Agents	56
1.4.2 Resistance of Biofilms to Environmental Stress	61
1.5 Biofilms as Opportunistic Self-Mobilizing Communities	64
1.6 Efficiency of Biofilms	71
1.6.1 Physiological Efficiency of Biofilms	71
1.6.2 Genetic Efficiency of Biofilms	74
1.6.3 Ecological Efficiency of Biofilms	75
1.7 Relationship of Conventional Single-Species Cultures to Natural Biofilm Populations	77
1.8 Biofilm-Based Understanding of Natural and Engineered Ecosystems	81
1.9 The Evolution of Biofilms	83
2 Control of all Biofilm Strategies and Behaviours	85
2.1 The Mobilization of Biofilm Communities	86
2.1.1 Signal Gradients in Microbial Biofilm Communities	89
2.2 Targeted Signaling in Microbial Biofilm Communities	94
2.3 Other Signaling Mechanisms in Microbial Biofilm Communities	96
2.4 Commensal Integration with Eukaryotes	97

3	The Microbiology of the Healthy Human Body	107
3.1	The Human Integument	107
3.2	The Human Female Reproductive System	109
3.3	The Human Urinary System	113
3.4	The Human Biliary System	116
3.5	The Human Pulmonary System	118
3.6	The Human Digestive System	120
3.7	The Human Ecosystem: an Emerging Perception	127
4	Replacement of Acute Planctonic by Chronic Biofilm Diseases	129
4.1	Etiology and Characteristics of Biofilm Infections	143
4.2	Biofilm-Based Strategies for the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Biofilm Infections	150
4.2.1	Reduction of "Bacterial Loads" and Colonization Rates . . .	152
4.2.2	Immune Monitoring and Immune Treatment of Biofilm Infections	154
4.2.3	Direct Manipulation of Biofilm Formation by Signal Inhibition	156
4.2.4	A Coordinated Approach to Biofilm Control	158
4.3	New Diseases, New Concepts, New Tools	161
5	Toward a Unified Biofilm Theory	169
5.1	A Personal Odyssey	169
5.2	General Principles Underlying the Biofilm Theory	171
5.3	The Biofilm Theory Can Unite and Revitalize Microbiology .	174
5.4	The Biofilm Theory	176
5.4.1	Narrative	176
5.4.2	Summary	179
5.4.3	Definition	179
5.5	The Way Forward	180
	References	181
	Suggested Reading	194
	Subject Index	197