
Preface

Antibodies are perhaps one of the most extraordinary species of protein ever to evolve during the history of life on Earth. These “magic bullets” have become an indispensable tool in the study of biology and medicine. In biology, they have been a key component of the surge in fundamental knowledge that has occurred in the last quarter century. In the practice of medicine, multiple vaccines have led to the control (at least in the developed world) of many infectious diseases, such as polio, mumps, measles, chicken pox, and the almost total eradication of smallpox.

We hope this book will be useful to biomedical researchers and students. Although new methods for making and using antibodies will certainly be found, their current applications—ELISAs, Western blotting, immunohistochemistry, and flow cytometry—are so powerful that they will remain critical to biomedical science for a considerable period.

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