

The cellular basis of mammalian reproduction.

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[The cellular basis of mammalian reproduction.](#)

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Book : [The cellular basis of mammalian reproduction.](#) 1979 pp.xii + 252 pp. ref.

Abstract : Animal breeders expect great things of embryologists, in that they can recover, freeze, sex and transfer embryos, and may be able to develop methods of nuclear transplantation, stimulate parthenogenetic development or divide embryos at early stages to produce several identical offspring. Similarly, there is great benefit in a method of improving reproductive performance. In this context this study of mammalian reproduction at a cellular level is of great interest. The book is primarily an atlas of the ultrastructure of cells concerned with reproduction, but some attempt is made to discuss the

those observations into a more general picture. There are five chapters, with groups of illustrations at the end of each chapter. In the first chapter there is a description of the morphology and growth of follicles to the stage where they ovulate in response to the surge of LH. In the second chapter, ovulation and development of the corpus luteum are described, and in the third chapter there is a brief description of the oviduct and vagina. The final chapters are concerned with the changes in spermatozoa during fertilisation, and the development of the embryo from fertilisation to the blastocyst stage. Most of the observations were made on rabbits, or in mice or other rodents, but some mention is made of observations on other animals. There are 85 full page plates, many of which are very clear and well labelled. Many of these are scanning electron micrographs, perhaps too many in that, for example, there is no transmission electron micrograph of a spermatozoon which has undergone the acrosome reaction. The book will provide fascinating insights at the cellular level to anyone who has a basic knowledge of the physiology of reproduction. Scanning electron micrographs of spermatozoa and the reproductive tract may help our understanding of the events of capacitation and the observations are related to information on fertilisation. A limitation of the book is that it does not always relate the structural changes to the physiological mechanisms which govern the changes. In the discussion of ovulation, no mention is made of the role of LH, which is presumed to induce ovulation. While mention is made of the mechanisms which govern the onset of follicle growth, there is no discussion of the hormones which are necessary for further follicle growth. In these circumstances the book is best suited for those with a good background knowledge of reproductive physiology. It might have been better if the authors had extended the discussion in order to make the observations to a wider audience. The price of \$29.50 is very reasonable for a book which is so well prepared. I. Wilmut

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