LC/MS: A Practical User's Guide

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In *LC/MS: A Practical User's Guide*, the author sets out to introduce LC/MS and provide some practical information for using it. The author has extensive experience with liquid chromatography, having authored an earlier work of over 200 pages on HPLC. The present offering seeks to provide a practical resource for LC/MS in 150 pages. The book may find a niche in introducing technicians to HPLC MS.

The first sections of the book cover HPLC instrumentation, sample preparation, and method development. Interfaces to the MS are described, followed by short chapters on mass analyzers and their maintenance. The final third of the book is devoted to applications of the technique.

The HPLC chapters will serve the beginning technician well. The author has extensive experience with HPLC, and these sections of the book, roughly the first third, are the most useful. The interested reader will find practical advice on pumps, solvents, and columns. They will not find much to help them choose chemis-

tries for columns or develop methods for separation. For this they are referred to the author's 1994 book on HPLC.

Since instruments are both analyzer- and manufacturer-specific, little practical advice will be gleaned from the chapters on analyzer operation and maintenance. Modern instruments have widely varying software and workflow strategies. In addition, it is also critical to service most machines in a particular way to avoid costly damage.

The remaining third of the book consists of spare descriptions of some specific applications and a few broad areas where LC/MS is used. These are introductory vignettes that give an idea of the scope of the field. They are often too short to be of any practical value. Speculation about the future of LC/MS and some appendices with useful information complete the volume.

This book may only serve as a basic introduction to LC/MS for beginning technicians. There is little depth to any topic covered, which makes the lack of references a glaring problem. There are no pointers for readers who would like to pursue the concepts or instruments in detail. While there is some practical information regarding the operation of an HPLC, there is little to be found for mass spectrometers. Thus, interested parties might be better served with a book on HPLC (perhaps an updated version of *HPLC: A Practical Guide* by McMaster) and a modern MS book (e.g., *Mass Spectrometry Principles and Applications* by E. deHoffmann and V. Stroobant). Other alternatives include Web-based resources from instrument manufacturers and educational institutions or review articles.