

Symposium on the Lymphatic System

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As President of the Microcirculatory Society (USA) it was my privilege to organize one of the symposia at the 2nd World Congress for Microcirculation held at the University of California, San Diego, July 23–27, 1979.

As an active member of the International Society of Lymphology, I asked three eminent scientists to review the anatomy and physiology of lymphatic vessels and lymph formation. I thank the Editors of *Lymphology* for permitting these presentations, revised for publication, to appear together in this issue.

My introductory remarks at the Symposium reviewed the life and contributions of Prof. C.K. *Drinker*, the founder of modern quantitative lymphology. That material appeared in *Lymphology* 12: 115–117, 1979.

I think it is fair to say that the lymphatic system has been treated as a "country cousin" of the cardiovascular system. This is partly due to the historic difficulty of finding lymphatics, much less measuring, specific lymphatic function. In part, however, it is due to the fact that some lymphologists seem to be more interested in narrow uses of the lymphatic system than to its function as a whole.

It is a truism to state that the higher animals (including man) cannot live without functioning lymphatics. The papers of this symposium are intended to remind microcirculationists and lymphologists of that fact.

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