

FOREWORD

Memories of my childhood take me back to the home of my grandfather, a country doctor who began his practice in 1898, and Sunday dinners that were interrupted by sick or injured patients' knocks on the door of his rural Texas home. He was a physician and it was his job to do what he could to ensure his patients lived better and longer lives.

Our specialty of plastic surgery began in the early years of the twentieth century in response to the need to treat war injuries of the face and mouth. The term "plastic" was appropriated because those early pioneers were using surgical techniques to "form or mold or make new" those parts of the face or body mutilated by the explosives and fires of World War I. These patients' lives were thus prolonged and made better.

After the war these special techniques were adapted to altering and making new parts disfigured not by war but by birth or development. Patients with deformities and undesirable appearances found solace in cosmetic surgery.

World War II served as a stage for further refinement of reconstructive methods and in the years after the war cosmetic surgery grew from its infancy into adolescence, with refinements in face, breast, and body contouring reaching adulthood in the 1970s and 1980s.

The solution to the social problems associated with hair loss, considered by many to be a stigma of aging, was a relatively late development. Hairpieces, large plugs, weaving, and flaps were often arduous undertakings resulting in feelings of hopelessness and dissatisfaction by those who sought treatment. It was not until the introduction of micrograft and minigraft techniques that surgeons could practically and effectively restore hair with good results.

Dr. Alfonso Barrera has combined the finite skills and techniques of an experienced master surgeon with the imagination of a creative artist. His inclusion of chapters devoted to restoration of hair loss following surgery and burns and correction of deformities of eyebrows and eyelashes make this the definitive textbook on management of problems involving hair.

Observations of lifestyles throughout the animal kingdom and depiction of humans throughout history confirm the importance of plumage, or hair, leaving

no question as to its role in an individual's self-esteem. Self-esteem is critical to a person's social, professional, and familial roles, and methods to improve the appearance of the hair will promote feelings of self-worth.

Like my grandfather whose days (and nights) were spent trying to improve the lives of his patients in Hankamer, Texas, Alfonso Barrera has given us a text that will allow plastic surgeons to contribute to their patients' well-being.

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As a plastic surgeon involved in hair transplantation for many years I have followed with interest Dr. Barrera's pioneering contributions in the use of micrografts and minigrafts for hair restoration. Our initial efforts using scalp grafts for treating alopecia of the scalp and repair of the mustache and eyelash met with some initial success. However, attempts at using free flaps failed to yield acceptable results until techniques for microvascular anastomosis of free flaps were perfected. Although scalp pedicle flaps from the parietal and occipital areas produced acceptable aesthetic results in male pattern baldness, there were two distinct disadvantages. Even though well integrated, the flap was visible as a camouflaging patch and the residual scar at the border of the hairline was conspicuous. With the advent of micrograft and minigraft techniques for hair transplantation, these problems have been solved.

I am impressed with the way Dr. Barrera guides the reader through each meticulous detail of his technique of transplantation, starting with anatomy and physiology of hair, patient evaluation, planning and patient instruction, and continuing with explicit instructions on the surgical technique, combined face lift and hair transplantation, reoperative surgery, and special applications. This book offers sound, up-to-date advice for acknowledged experts and authorities in hair transplantation as well as the novice.

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