

Venue:	Doody's Book Review Service
Title:	Book Review: Spiral bound: integrated anatomy for yoga, Karen Kirkness
Date:	2021
Type:	Book Review
Author(s)/ Presenter(s):	Tom Braem
Abstract (or Book Review):	<p>Description</p> <p>This book covers some points about embryology and postulates that embryology influences movement. The author believes that all movement is "spiral" and that spiral movement patterns are the same for all humans and, to some degree, all vertebrates. She believes that spiral movement patterns are composed of closed kinematic chains that differ from classical biomechanical levers and model an interconnectedness throughout the body. I do not see any unique structural elements.</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>The purpose of the book seems to be to help readers understand how the anatomy of the body influences movement, specifically movements involved in the practice of yoga. This is an interesting objective, and one that has been explored in several other books such as <i>Yoga: Fascia, Anatomy and Movement</i> (Handspring Publishing, 2015) by Joanne Avison who is one of several authors mentioned in the preface/introduction. I am unsure if any of the books that have explored this objective have fully succeeded. The book meets some of the objective, but seems to "bog down" and selectively choose material that supports the author's position while ignoring information that does not.</p> <p>Audience</p> <p>The book's intended audience is yoga practitioners, movement professionals, and anyone curious about how gross and subtle anatomy come together. I think the book might meet the need of a select subpopulation within the targeted audience. The author states that the following are valuable assets for readers: "familiarity with the subtle body, some experience of yoga, basic anatomy background, and general curiosity about the interconnected-ness of patterns in nature." At times, the book seems to require more than each of these "general" or "basic" backgrounds. The credentials and experience of the author do seem credible.</p> <p>Features</p>

The book explores some aspects of embryology in detail and bypasses others. There is a focus on how embryology influences patterns of movement. The idea that all movement patterns are "spiral" in nature is a central theme of the book, as well as the idea that spiral movement patterns are the same for all humans and, to some degree, all vertebrates. Another central theme of the book is how these spiral movements and their compositional "closed kinematic chains" are evidenced in yoga. The features utilized, such as illustrations, photos, diagrams, and a glossary, are not unique but are well executed and sufficient in number. The author does seem to selectively utilize information that supports her position - such as saying that all movement is spiral in nature but then only focusing on joints where rotational movement is allowed (shoulder, hip) and conveniently skipping joints (humero-ulnar, interphalangeal) where it is not. Sections of the book delve into depth on anatomy that is well beyond the intended audience with a "basic anatomy background" or yoga concepts and poses that are beyond those with "some experience of yoga."

Assessment

This book has parts that will be useful to some of the intended audience. As a whole, however, it falls short of providing information that would be useful to all those for whom it is intended. This is a similar shortcoming of other books in this area, such as ***Yoga: Fascia, Anatomy, and Movement***, Avison (Handspring Publishing, 2015).