

- Herbal Dentistry. Herbal Dental Remedies from Ancient Times to the Present Day.** Joseph G. Carter and William J. Carter. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1990. Pp. 77 (typescript). \$17.95 (softcover). ISBN 0-930989-01-8.
- Folk Dentistry. Cultural Evolution of Folk Remedies for Toothache.** Joseph G. Carter and William J. Carter. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1990. Pp. 104 (typescript). \$17.95 (softcover). ISBN 0-930989-01-9.

Information addressing herbal dentistry is rarely a prominent theme in folk medical and ethnobotanical studies. Dental information is usually buried among the menagerie of ethnobotanical data. But in *Herbal Dentistry* is an impressive array of history, ethnobotany, and folk dental practices compiled into a compact and very readable volume.

This booklet contains 47 plant illustrations, four pharmacological tables, a two-part Appendix, a glossary, and a bibliography. The information is arranged so that one can approach the book with a question regarding cultural uses of plants. Unfortunately, this arrangement makes it difficult if one is searching for the use of a specific plant. The first section concentrates on the pharmacological aspects of herbal plant use pertinent to herbal dentistry. The authors assume some prior knowledge of pharmacology and plant taxonomy. The section is broken down as follows: Counterirritants, Anesthetics, Analgesics, Narcotics, and Astringents. Next, applications of herbal toothache remedies and magical and superstitious herbal remedies are discussed. Although the book is 77 pages in length the two-part Appendix begins on page 19. Part A of the Appendix is a taxonomic listing of plants by family. Each entry provides scientific and common nomenclature, pharmacological data, plus geographical and cultural identification. Part B is an alphabetical listing of cultural and geographic plant uses. This section is divided regionally into: North American Indians; United States (1600–1980); Mexico; Caribbean Islands; Central America; Middle America; South America; Ancient Greece and Rome; Modern Sicily; Germany and Austria; Eastern Europe; France; Great Britain; General Europe; Russia; Egypt and the Middle East; Southern Asia; Africa; Western Indian Ocean; East Asia and Japan; Western Pacific; and Oceania and Australia.

The booklet contains an array of useful ethnobotanical information but is also teeming with brief historic summaries of folk dental use that beg for longer discussions; the companion publication by the same authors, *Folk Dentistry: Cultural Evolution of Folk Remedies for Toothache* meets this need. For an additional \$17.95 this 104-page booklet is an illuminating complement to *Herbal Dentistry*.

*Herbal Dentistry* requires an index to enhance the search for specific information and the tables should be printed so that they do not blend with the general text. Minor problems aside, both books would be handy additions to the library of anyone interested in ethnobotany, ethnopharmacology, and historic folk-remedies.

Enrique Salmón  
Arizona State University  
Department of Anthropology  
Tempe, Arizona 85287