

# THE DEFINITIVE GUIDES TO THE X WINDOW SYSTEM

## VOLUME SIX B

### **Motif Reference Manual** *for OpenMotif 2.3*

Open Source Edition

Based upon the manual written by Antony Fountain  
and Paula Ferguson, O'Reilly and Associates

Updated and Published by Peter Winston and the  
Technical Staff of Integrated Computer Solutions,  
Inc.



## **Motif Reference Manual, Open Source Edition for OpenMotif version 2.3**

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December 2001

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This is an updated version of the Motif Reference Manual, Open Source Edition for Motif 2.1, published by Imperial Software Technology in December 2001. The source files for this version of the document are available at <http://www.motifzone.org>. The source files for the Open Source Edition can be found at [http://www.ist.co.uk/motif/motif\\_refs.html](http://www.ist.co.uk/motif/motif_refs.html). A description of the modifications is contained in the Preface to the Open Source Edition.

The Open Source Edition is a modified version of the Motif Reference Manual, Second Edition, published by O'Reilly & Associates in February 2000. The source files for the Second Edition can be found at <http://www.oreilly.com/openbook/motif/>. A description of the modifications is contained in the Preface to the Third Edition, which has become the Open Source Edition.

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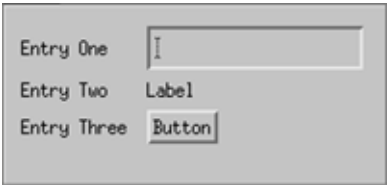

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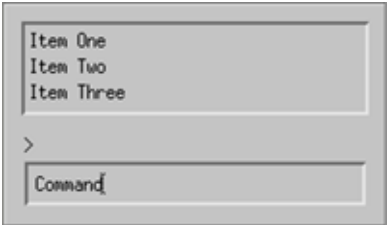
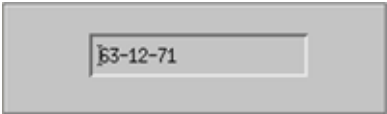
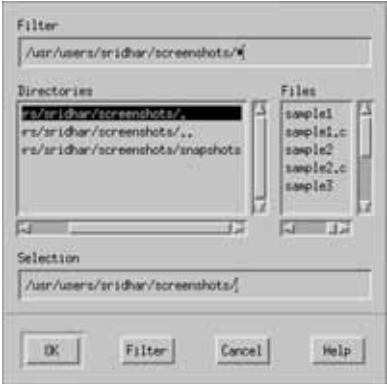


# Visual Widget Index

This section serves as a graphical widget index to allow users to quickly find the reference pages they are searching for.

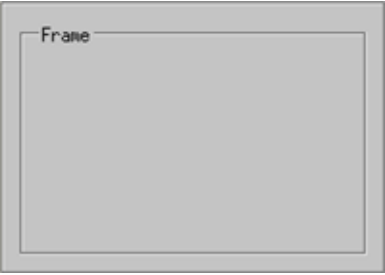

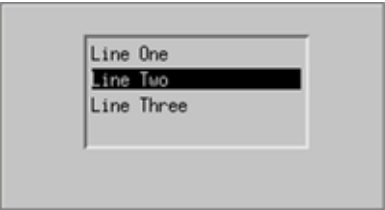
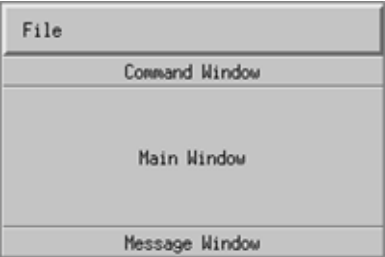
Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmArrowButton	656
	XmColumn	688
	XmComboBox	692

Visual Widget Index

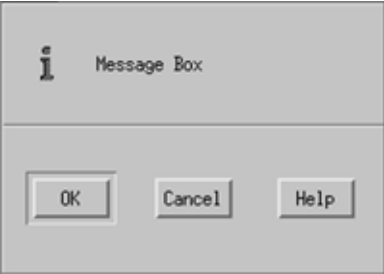
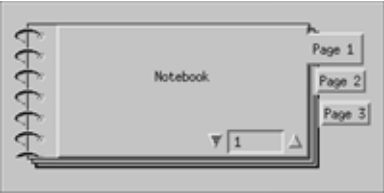
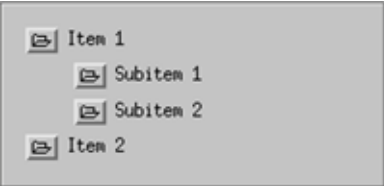
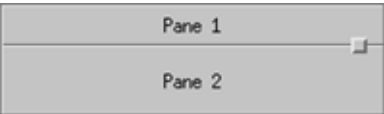

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
 The icon shows a rectangular widget with a light gray background. Inside, there is a smaller rectangle containing the text "Item One", "Item Two", and "Item Three" stacked vertically. Below this rectangle is a small right-pointing chevron ">". At the bottom of the widget is a horizontal text entry field containing the word "Command".	XmCommand	702
 The icon shows a rectangular widget with a light gray background. Inside, there is a horizontal text entry field containing the text "63-12-71".	XmDataField	727
 The icon shows a complex file selection dialog box. At the top is a "Filter:" label and a text field containing "/usr/users/sridhar/screenshots/*". Below this are two panes: "Directories" on the left and "Files" on the right. The "Directories" pane lists "/usr/users/sridhar/screenshots/", "/usr/users/sridhar/screenshots/..", and "/usr/users/sridhar/screenshots/snapshots". The "Files" pane lists "sample1", "sample1.c", "sample2", "sample2.c", and "sample3". Below the panes is a "Selection:" label and a text field containing "/usr/users/sridhar/screenshots/". At the bottom are four buttons: "OK", "Filter", "Cancel", and "Help".	XmFileSelectionBox	777




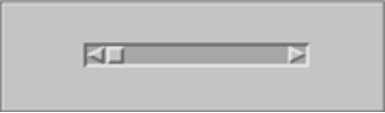
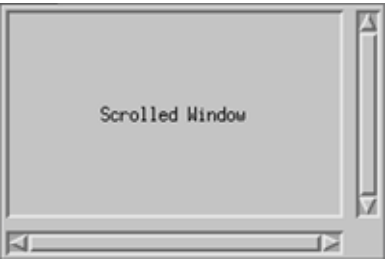

## Visual Widget Index

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmFrame	799
	XmLabel	829
	XmList	838
	XmMainWindow	855

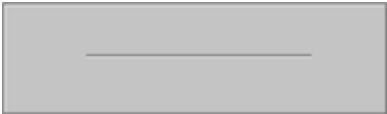


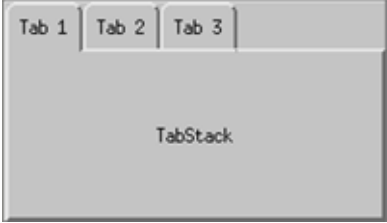
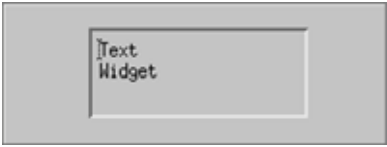
## Visual Widget Index

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmMessageBox	873
	XmNotebook	886
	XmOutline	897
	XmPanedWindow	900
	XmPushButton	921


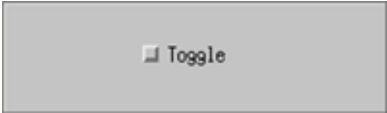
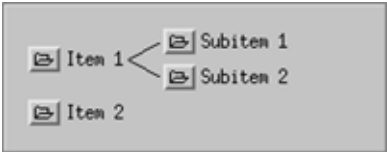
## Visual Widget Index

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmScale	953
	XmScrollBar	967
	XmScrolledWindow	979
	XmSelectionBox	985

**Visual Widget Index**

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmSeparator	994
	XmSimpleSpinBox	999
	XmSpinBox	1004
	XmTabStack	1014
	XmText	1021

**Visual Widget Index**

Widget Icon	Widget Name	Reference Guide Page Number
	XmTextField	1040
	XmToggleButton	1045
	XmTree	1058



# Preface

## Preface to the Open Source Edition version 2.3

From its inception, Motif was destined to become a tremendous success. When the Open Software Foundation delivered the first version of Motif, it was adopted by almost all major users and system vendors, and became the de facto standard in user interface development for UNIX<sup>TM</sup> applications. Motif's initial phase of development was also accelerated through competition with Open Look.

After the battle with Open Look was won, Motif went into its second phase of evolution. Though ubiquitous in the UNIX community, Motif development and enhancement stagnated for many years while desktop applications migrated to the Web, Windows, and to a lesser extent, Linux.

Now Motif is entering a third phase, an exciting growth phase, where it is being enhanced by an active Open Source community. This is the first new major edition in over four years (since the 2.1.30 release). This version of Motif adds support for modern images, fonts, as well as adds new widgets. But this is only the beginning. Going forward, the OpenMotif project team is already putting plans in place and organizing broad community support to modernize the “look and feel” of Motif, integrate it with current desktops, and make Motif applications accessible to all. If you would like to join the OpenMotif project team, please visit the OpenMotif homepage at: <http://www.openmotif.org> or the Motif Zone at <http://www.motifzone.org>.

In this release of the Open Motif Reference Guide 6b, the documentation has been updated to reflect the changes in Motif since Motif 2.1.

- Appendix F lists the changes from Motif 2.1 to OpenMotif 2.2
- Appendix G lists the changes from OpenMotif 2.2 to OpenMotif 2.3, as well as explains some of the new features.
- A visual widget index has been added to help identify Motif widgets more quickly.
- The status of some widgets has changed and some new Motif capabilities have been added. For more information on this, please see the *OpenMotif 2.3 Release Notes*.

These changes are our own and are not the responsibility of, or endorsed by, the authors of the previous version. This document does not assert or imply endorsement of this modified book by its original authors or publisher.

*Peter Winston*

## **Preface to the Open Source Edition**

Many thanks to all at O'Reilly and Associates for releasing this, Volume 6B, and the companion Volume 6A, the Motif Programming Manual, in open source. Both have been extensively revised for Motif 2.1; this, the Motif Reference Manual, has had several alterations to the 2nd edition as printed:

- all the function prototypes and examples have been converted to strict ANSI format
- the UIL sections have been restored
- the Xt Session Shell is documented
- many bug patches have been folded in
- new examples have been added to Motif 2.1 procedure sections
- the book sources have been converted from the original troff into FrameMaker and PDF formats

Removing the UIL portions from the original printed second edition was a hard decision; the Motif 2.1 toolkit was a much expanded library since previous versions of the book, and something had to give - the book was over a thousand pages as it was. However, an electronic copy does not have the same space restrictions as the printed tome, and so these materials, originally in the Motif 1.2 version of the manual, have been restored. They also have been reworked for Motif 2.1.

*Antony J. Fountain*

## **Preface to the Second Edition**

What to put in, and what to leave out, of this update to the Motif Reference Manual was the hardest decision of all. The guiding principle has been to consider for whom this material is intended. This is a Programmer's Reference, and not a Widget Author's handbook. Accordingly, those aspects of the new Trait mechanisms which an application programmer needs to know have been included, but the Xme utilities have not. Specifying a Trait as a well-defined piece of behaviour which a widget supports, it is enough to know which traits a Widget Class supports, and how this affects objects in the widget instance hierarchy. How a Trait is implemented, and which methods are associated with the given Trait, are generally the domain of the widget author. Hence it is recorded that the VendorShell holds the XmQTspecifyRenderTableTrait, and that this means that widget classes further down the widget instance hierarchy inherit default Render Table information from the VendorShell. This is all that the Application Programmer needs to know: the rest is silence.

Conversely, the Motif Input Method utilities have been included. Although mostly defined originally in the Motif 1.2 release, and although the Motif widget classes generally handle connections to an Input Method when and where this is required, there is an important exception. The Motif Drawing Area does not register itself with an Input Method automatically, and hence



## Preface

anyone who needs to directly implement internationalized input for this widget class most certainly would need to know about the XmIm functions. The World does not all speak English: for these reasons, the XmIm functions are included in the Manual.

A brief note concerning the status of Motif as the premier Unix toolkit. A number of alternative toolkits have arisen, particularly in the Linux domain, which offer an X-based windowing system for the Unix, and other, platforms. I refer principally to the likes of Qt, and GTK+. These on the whole dispense with the Xt layer, in order to provide small, lightweight GUI components which are, from the application programmer's perspective, relatively easy to port to non-Unix domains. Although admirable in many ways, these suffer from one crucial drawback, precisely because Xt has been excluded: there is no object component model associated with any of the objects which can be created in an interface<sup>1</sup>. Compare and contrast with something like JavaBeans, where a GUI builder can be designed which can dynamically load and query objects from whatever source, and from thence inspect the attributes of the object, construct resource panels, and generate code for the components, all without any external configuration. Based on Xt, Motif also has this important property: I can in principle dynamically load into my GUI builder any third party component, construct an internal attribute list, present resource panels for object configuration to the user, and from there generate source code. Just by interrogating the widget class. All the commercial GUI builders available for Motif support this.

The newer alternative Linux toolkits do not have this introspective quality. Writing GUI builders happens to be what I do for a living: sad to say, I cannot write one for these toolkits precisely because there is no component model at the object level. Not surprisingly, no third party component market exists for the toolkits either: there is no GUI builder into which these components can be dynamically slotted. Each needs the other, but there is nothing which allows them to talk. In the absence of either a commercial component market, or a dynamic GUI builder, there remains serious question marks concerning the scalability of the alternative toolkits, whatever merits they hold. The only alternatives are to write all the code by hand, or pass control of the application to a private piece of hobbyware which masquerades as a support environment. Ironically, the advent of Java has cemented Motif: the JDK relies on Motif for the native implementation on the Unix platform. Until such time as a native toolkit surfaces which has this important introspective property, Motif remains what it has long been, the only native toolkit for Unix which supports large scale internationalized applications.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. True at the moment of writing. It is still true that all the information required to dynamically introspect an object's entire resource set, particularly if user-defined and not built-in to the basic set, is not completely forthcoming. Introspecting third party components remains troublesome for a dynamic GUI builder.

2. The contents of this paragraph were true at the moment of writing. There is now a commercial GUI builder for the Linux toolkits; whether it survives in a free software environment remains to be seen. It is still true that the large scale commercial concerns continue to use Motif for their native Unix toolkit.

## About the Motif Toolkit

The Motif toolkit, from the Open Software Foundation (OSF), is based on the X Toolkit Intrinsics (Xt), which is the standard mechanism on which many of the toolkits written for the X Window System are based. Xt provides a library of user-interface objects called widgets and gadgets, which provide a convenient interface for creating and manipulating X windows, colormaps, events, and other cosmetic attributes of the display. In short, widgets can be thought of as building blocks that the programmer uses to construct a complete application.

However, the widgets that Xt provides are generic in nature and impose no user-interface policy whatsoever. Providing the look and feel of an interface is the job of a user-interface toolkit such as Motif. Motif provides a complete set of widgets that are designed to implement the application look and feel specified in the *Motif Style Guide* and the *Motif Application Environment Specification*. The Motif toolkit also includes a library of functions for creating and manipulating the widgets and other aspects of the user interface.

The Motif toolkit has other components in addition to the widget set and related functions. Motif provides a User Interface Language (UIL) for describing the initial state of a user interface. UIL is designed to permit rapid prototyping of the user interface for an application. The Motif Resource Manager (Mrm) functions provide the interface between C language application code and UIL. Motif also provides the Motif Window Manager (*mwm*). The appearance and behavior of this window manager is designed to be compatible with the appearance and behavior of the Motif widget set.

## About This Manual

This manual contains reference material on the Motif toolkit. This edition is based on Motif 2.1, which is the latest major release of the Motif toolkit. Motif 1.2 is based on Release 6 of the Xlib and Xt specifications (X11R6). This release of Motif provides many new features, including new widget classes and several new functions. In order to cover all of the material, it became necessary to split Volume Six into two separate manuals, a programming manual and a reference manual. Volume Six A is the *Motif Programming Manual* and Volume Six B is the *Motif Reference Manual*.

This manual is part of the sixth volume in the O'Reilly & Associates X Window System Series. It includes reference pages for each of the Motif functions and macros, for the Motif and Xt Intrinsics widget classes, for the Mrm functions, for the Motif clients, and for the UIL file format, data types, and functions. A permuted index and numerous quick reference appendices are also provided.

Volume Six B includes reference pages for all of the new functions and widgets in Motif 2.0 and 2.1. When the functionality of an existing routine or widget has changed in Motif 2.0 or 2.1, the

## Preface

reference page explains the differences between the two versions. Volume Six B also provides a complete set of reference material for UIL and Mrm, which was not covered in the previous edition.

Volumes Six A and B are designed to be used together. Volume Six A provides a complete programmer's guide to the Motif toolkit. Each chapter of the book covers a particular component of the Motif toolkit. Each chapter includes basic tutorial material about creating and manipulating the component, intermediate-level information about the configurable aspects of the component, and any advanced programming topics that are relevant. The chapters also provide numerous programming examples.

To get the most out of the examples in Volume Six A, you will need the exact calling sequences of each function from Volume Six B. To understand fully how to use each of the routines described in Volume Six B, all but the most experienced Motif programmers will need the explanations and examples in Volume Six A.

While the Motif toolkit is based on Xt, the focus of this manual is on Motif itself, not on the X Toolkit Intrinsics. Reference pages for the Xt widget classes are included here to provide a complete picture of the widget class hierarchy. Many reference pages mention related Xt routines, but the functionality of these routines is not described. Detailed information about Xt is provided by Volume 4, *X Toolkit Intrinsics Programming Manual, Motif Edition*, and Volume 5, *X Toolkit Intrinsics Reference Manual*.

## How This Manual is Organized

Volume Six B is designed to make it easy and fast to look up virtually any fact about the Motif toolkit. It contains reference pages and numerous helpful appendices.

The book is organized as follows:

Preface	Describes the organization of the book and the conventions it follows.
Section 1	<i>Motif Functions and Macros</i> , contains reference pages for all of Motif functions and macros.
Section 2	<i>Motif and Xt Widget Classes</i> , contains reference pages for the widget classes defined by the Motif toolkit and the X Toolkit Intrinsics.
Section 3	<i>Mrm Functions</i> , contains reference pages for the Motif Resource Manager functions that are used in conjunctions with the User Interface Language.

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Section 4	<i>Motif Clients</i> , contains reference pages for the Motif clients: <i>mwm</i> , <i>uil</i> , and <i>xmbind</i> .
Section 5	<i>UIL File Format</i> , contains reference pages that describe the file format of a User Interface Language module.
Section 6	<i>UIL Data Types</i> , contains reference pages for the data types supported by the User Interface Language.
Section 7	<i>UIL Functions</i> , contains reference pages for the User Interface Language functions.
Appendix A	<i>Function Summaries</i> , provides quick reference tables that list each Motif function alphabetically and also by functional groups.
Appendix B	<i>Data Types</i> , lists and explains in alphabetical order the structures, enumerated types, and other typedefs used for arguments to Motif and Mrm functions.
Appendix C	<i>Table of Motif Resources</i> , lists all of the resources provided by Motif and Xt widget classes, along with their types and the classes that define them.
Appendix D	<i>Table of UIL Objects</i> , lists all of the objects supported by the User Interface Language, along with their corresponding Motif widget classes.
Appendix E	<i>New Features in Motif 1.2</i> , lists the new functions, widget classes, and widget resources in Motif 1.2.
Appendix F	<i>New Features in Motif 2.2</i> , lists the new functions, widget classes, and widget resources in Motif 2.2
Appendix G	<i>New Features in Motif 2.3</i> , lists the new functions and widget resources in Motif 2.3
Index	Should help you to find what you need to know.

## Assumptions

This book assumes that the reader is familiar with the C programming language and the concepts and architecture of the X Toolkit, which are presented in Volume 4, *X Toolkit Intrinsics Programming Manual, Motif Edition*, and Volume 5, *X Toolkit Intrinsics Reference Manual*. A basic understanding of the X Window System is also useful. For some advanced topics, the reader may need to consult Volume 1, *Xlib Programming Manual*, and Volume 2, *Xlib Reference Manual*.

## Preface

### Related Documents

The following books on the X Window System are available from O'Reilly & Associates, Inc.:

Volume Zero	<i>X Protocol Reference Manual</i>
Volume One	<i>Xlib Programming Manual</i>
Volume Two	<i>Xlib Reference Manual</i>
Volume Three	<i>X Window System User's Guide, Motif Edition</i>
Volume Four <i>Edition</i>	<i>X Toolkit Intrinsics Programming Manual, Motif Edition</i>
Volume Five	<i>X Toolkit Intrinsics Reference Manual</i>
Volume Six A	<i>Motif Programming Manual</i>
Volume Seven including reference volume.	<i>XView Programming Manual</i> with accompanying reference volume.
Volume Eight	<i>X Window System Administrator's Guide</i>
	<i>PHIGS Programming Manual</i>
	<i>PHIGS Reference Manual</i>
	<i>PEXlib Programming Manual</i>
	<i>PEXlib Reference Manual</i>
Quick Reference	<i>The X Window System in a Nutshell</i>
Programming Supplement for Release 6 of the X Window System	

### Conventions Used in This Book

*Italic* is used for:

- UNIX pathnames, filenames, program names, user command names, options for user commands, and variable expressions in syntax sections.
- New terms where they are defined.

Constant Width Font is used for:

- Anything that would be typed verbatim into code, such as examples of source code and text on the screen.
- Variables, data structures (and fields), symbols (defined constants and bit flags), functions, macros, and a general assortment of anything relating to the C programming language.
- All functions relating to Motif, Xt, and Xlib.

## Preface

- Names of subroutines in example programs.

*Constant Width Italic* Font is used for:

- Arguments to functions, since they could be typed in code as shown but are arbitrary names that could be changed.

*Helvetica Italic* is used for:

- Titles of examples, figures, and tables.

**Boldface** is used for:

- Chapter headings, section headings, and the names of buttons and menus.

## We'd Like to Hear From You

We have tested and verified all of the information in this book to the best of our ability, but you may find that features have changed (or even that we have made mistakes!). Please let us know about any errors you find, as well as your suggestions for future editions, by posting at the Motif Zone:

<http://www.motifzone.org/forum/viewforum.php?f=52>

or by contacting ICS directly at:

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617.621.0060

[info@ics.com](mailto:info@ics.com)

## Acknowledgements

This book developed out of the realization that it would be impossible to update the first edition of Volume Six to cover Motif 1.2 without dividing the original book into two books. Dan Heller, David Flanagan, Adrian Nye, and Tim O'Reilly all provided valuable suggestions on how best to expand the original reference appendices into a full-fledged reference manual.

The Motif reference pages in this book are based on the reference appendices from the first edition, which were developed by Daniel Gilly. His work meant that I didn't have to start from scratch, and thus saved many hours of toil. The OSF/Motif reference material also provided a helpful foundation from which to explore the complexities of the Motif toolkit. Many of the

## **Preface**

Motif examples in the book were borrowed from the first edition of Volume Six. These examples were written by Dan Heller, although they have been updated for Motif 1.2

Dave Brennan, of HaL Computer Systems, took on the unenviable task of learning everything there is to know about UIL and Mrm, so that he could write the UIL reference material. He did a great job.

Adrian Nye deserves special recognition for freeing me to work on this project, when I'm sure that he had other projects he would have liked to send my way. I don't think either one of us had any idea how involved this update project would become. The other inhabitants of the "writer's block" at O'Reilly & Associates, Valerie Quercia, Linda Mui, and Ellie Cutler, provided support that kept me sane while I was working on the book. Extra gratitude goes to Linda Mui for her work on the cross references and the reference tables; her knowledge of various tools prevented me from doing things the hard way. Tim O'Reilly also provided editorial support that improved the quality of the reference material.

Special thanks go to the people who worked on the production of this book. The final form of this book is the work of the staff at O'Reilly & Associates. The authors would like to thank Chris Reilly for the figures, Ellie Cutler for indexing, Lenny Muellner for tools support, Eileen Kramer for copy editing and production of the final copy, and Clairemarie Fisher O'Leary for final proofing and printing. Thanks also to Donna Woonteiler for her patience in answering my questions and helping me to understand the production process.

Despite the efforts of all of these people, the authors alone are responsible for any errors or omissions that remain.

*Paula M. Ferguson*

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