

concern toward important biological problems of the future.

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THE CONTROL OF HUMAN HEREDITY AND EVOLUTION, T. M. Sonneborn, Ed., 127 pp., MacMillan, New York, 1965.

This is the kind of book which should be required reading for all biologists, biology teachers, advanced students, and most importantly, certain of the intelligent leadership of the public. The book is the result of a symposium organized by Sonneborn on the subject of how the genetics of an individual can be controlled and changed. This is a frightening but very real prospect which all scientifically literate citizens must learn about in order to cope with it if it becomes a reality.

The methods discussed are many, ranging from genetic surgery to the sperm bank approach of Muller. The panelists are absolutely topflight, including Muller, Luria, Tatum, Demars, and Pontecorvo, with comments by a distinguished group of geneticists. Unfortunately, there is no index.

The implications of the serious discussions recorded here give one a hint of Huxley's world which now seems on the verge of probabilities as it moves from possibilities. This is the type of biological knowledge which should be the background for many fertile investigations and discussions among social scientists, the clergy, and political leaders.

THE GENETIC CODE: COLD SPRING HARBOR SYMPOSIUM ON QUANTITATIVE BIOLOGY, 762 pp., \$15.00, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, 1966.

The Cold Spring Harbor Symposium of 1966 was attended by an impressive group of investigators who gathered in the informal setting of Cold Spring Harbor to discuss a topic of current biological importance. Their presentations and discussions provide the contents of Volume XXXI on *The Genetic Code*. F. H. C. Crick, Nobel laureate and co-author of the now "classical" DNA helix model, wrote the introduction on "The genetic code—yesterday, today, and tomorrow" as a historical review and synthesis of the problem. The other contributions are subdivided into categories such as: Codons in vitro, Directions of reading, *In vivo* code and polarity, Control of gene expression, Transfer RNA (further subdivided into chemistry, function, interactions and ribosomes), Infidelity of information transfer, and Origins of the code. Some 87 papers were presented with

some 280 biologists and biochemists participating. Most of the papers contain new data and contributions in addition to details of related investigations by others.

The papers are written by specialists and primarily for specialists; the genetic code is discussed from many points of view and different approaches principally using microorganisms as the experimental biological material. However, even looking through this volume superficially, the reader can appreciate the tremendous amount of data bearing directly on the genetic code which was only an hypothesis a decade and a half ago.

The volume is dedicated to the eminent geneticist Milislav Demerec (1895-1966) who for many years was associated with the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory as its Director from 1941 until his retirement in 1960. Demerec was responsible for the choice of timely topics, selection of participants and organization of the Cold Spring Harbor Symposia programs, which greatly promoted modern genetics and biology of bringing together scientists from all over the world to present and discuss their work.

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PROTEIN BIOSYNTHESIS AND PROBLEMS OF HEREDITY, DEVELOPMENT AND AGING, Zhores A. Medvedev, 584 pp., \$25.00, Plenum Press, New York, 1966.

This is an English translation (by Ann Synge) and updating of the original Russian text published at the end of 1963. The book is post-Lysenko in tone and its approach will be familiar to most American biologists. The style is easily readable, albeit fraught with common stylistic faults found in scientific writing, and the book is outlined and individual sections presented such that many portions may be understood out of context, yet the book as a whole retains cohesion. There are too few diagrams and plates, and these are too often crowded and poorly reproduced.

The material content, however, is very diverse, simply grounded, and should be of use to biology teachers who wish to include biochemistry of proteins and nucleic acids as entities or as background information in their courses. Subject matter is separated into 20 chapters, many relatively short, and most briefly summarized at the end. There are four major areas of subject matter considered: First, general features of biological synthesis of proteins, including brief reviews of protein and nucleic acid structure and specificity, are presented.