

WHO SHALL LIVE? MAN'S CONTROL OVER BIRTH AND DEATH: A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE. 1970. Hill & Wang, Inc., New York. 113 pp. \$1.75 softback, \$3.95 hardback.

The theme of this timely book is that the population crisis threatens the quality of human life: for the sake of the individual, the family, and society, population and resources must be brought into balance. The authors are eight professionals appointed by the American Friends Service Committee. They say:

. . . contraception is by far preferable to abortion. But we also believe that abortion performed under proper conditions, is preferable to the birth of an unwanted child. We believe that every child should be wanted by and born into a family that is able to feed, clothe, educate and, above all, love him; that the family is the basic unit of our society and that the married life of the parents should encompass sexual activity whether or not for purposes of procreation . . . [and] that in view of the problem of overpopulation, every couple has a responsibility to society as well as their own family, not to overburden the world with more lives than it can sustain.

In the authors' view it is the quality of life, not its quantity, that is most important. They ask, "How can we maintain the size of the population so that every individual does not merely survive but can develop fully and participate in society in a satisfying and productive way?" Within this framework, they urge repeal of all laws limiting the circumstances under which a woman might have an abortion or infringing the physician's freedom to use his own judgment in abortion matters. They also question the morality of keeping alive the very old, the incurable, and those on the verge of death ". . . if, by evidence of brain death or such other evidence as the medical profession deems valid, it is the best judgment of the medical profession that the patient's brain is irreparably damaged and he will never recover consciousness." They conclude that a healthy perspective on death might lead us to devote more resources to making life better instead of longer. And it might encourage us to think of immortality, not in terms of unending personal life but in terms of contributions to the continuity of culture, memories left behind, or a heritage of thought and values passed on to future generations.

The book is documented with seven appendices and 21 pages of annotated bibliography. The appendices are a wealth of information summarizing population data; effects of birth, death, and fertility rates on population; re-

productive processes and fertility control; historic positions taken by churches and other institutions on the issue of abortion; abortion laws; definitions of death; and laws concerning donations of tissues and organs.

The committee raised more questions than it answered. Preeminently, it raised the issue of life's quality—and it did so with a compassionate awareness that progress in medicine, as in other scientific fields, has outpaced society's ability to update the guidelines for its application.

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WEATHER AND HEALTH, by H. E. Landsberg. 1969. Doubleday & Co., New York. 148 pp., \$1.25.

This interesting softbound book is one in the "Science Study" series. It explores the effects of weather on the human body and human activities. The emphasis is not on major weather hazards but more subtle influences. The effects of environmental factors, such as altitude, sun, cold, and heat, are discussed in separate chapters. The ways in which cities alter climate and the relationships between weather and human performance, suffering, and infections are also discussed.

The book is easy to read; it should be understood by the average high school sophomore. It illustrates with good examples the physiologic adaptations of the human body to environmental influences and the ways in which man's activities have altered the environment in which he lives. It is an interesting treatment of relationships that are commonly neglected.

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THE ORIGINS OF MAN, by John Napier. 1969. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York. 32 pp. \$4.50.

This well-illustrated book for grades 5 to 8 is very timely for those concerned with the teaching of evolution in the elementary school. On the assumption that children are more interested in people than in other creatures, this book might well serve as an introduction to a study of evolution. The early chapters, which deal with evolution in general, should stimulate young readers to ask questions about the evolution of all animals.

The excellent drawings by artist Maurice Wilson depict enough action to capture the imagination of the most activity-oriented child. This book should be in the school library, if not used in the classroom.

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YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY, by Thomas Gordon Lawrence, Alice Schriver, Douglas F. Powers, and Louis J. Vorhaus. 6th ed., 1969. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York. 692 pp. \$4.80.

This is an up-to-date version of the health books that have for so long been a part of the American educational scene. Many aspects of physical and mental health are discussed; they include diet, physical appearance and cleanliness, human anatomy and physiology, and human disease.

The illustrations are adequate and the text is written so that an average high school sophomore can understand it. Each of the chapters begins with a study guide—a list of questions the student should be able to answer after studying the chapter carefully—and ends with a chapter review consisting of more questions and a vocabulary list. The entire book seems to lack imagination in presentation and gives the student little opportunity to explore some of the aspects of anatomy and physiology through laboratory experiences. The lack of a laboratory manual to accompany this book is a serious oversight on the part of the authors and the publishers.

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## MICROBIOLOGY

MICROBIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS, by Harold J. Benson. 1969. William C. Brown Co., Dubuque, Iowa. 192 pp. \$3.95.

This is a thorough, as well as understandable, approach to the basic techniques and methods of the general microbiologist. It is an abridged edition of the more comprehensive version of *Microbiological Applications*. The five major sections consist of 31 exercises and two appendices. Included in the appendices are such necessary materials as a preparation guide for all stains and reagents used in the exercises, and detachable laboratory report forms.

The basic microbiologic techniques, such as microscopy, pure culture methods, slide techniques, media preparation, and bacterial population counts are presented in section I. A rather brief survey of protozoa, algae, and fungi is also given in this section. The growth and control of microorganisms, covered in section II, includes studies of the effects of temperature, pH, osmotic pressure, and ultraviolet light on growth, as well as methods of evaluating disinfectants, antiseptics, and antibiotics. Section III deals with identification of unknown bacteria and presents studies of the preparation and care of stock cultures; morphologic, cultural, and physiologic characteristics are described in relation to the use of *Bergey's Manual*. The sanitary microbiology of section IV has been reduced to three topics: the