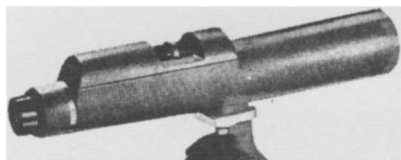


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the hyrax rivals the hippopotamus. A green earth, on pages 800 and 801, exists solely for the placement of 52 small and unclear numbers showing fossil sites.

One gets the distinct impression that different parts of the book were written by different people, who did not compare notes. On page 23, for example, are listed 23 animal phyla; but on page 771 one is introduced to a phylum Tentaculata, which is not among the 23 earlier introduced. But then, some of the 23 phyla are not dealt with in the chapter on animals; so it all balances out. The animal chapter emphasizes the frequent textual unevenness and bias. It finds space for over five inches of type on sponges but disposes of birds in less than an inch and a half.

Although the book appears to be "mod," authors need to catch up in certain matters of content. On page 228, radioactive phosphorus is still labeled P<sup>32</sup>, a designation now superseded. Race gets relatively short shrift in this volume: it would seem that a "with it" book would attempt to introduce more pictures of minority groups, even if only for cosmetic purposes.

An interesting feature of the volume is its apparent lack of authorship. There is an impressive list of "contributing consultants" in the front of the book, and an even more impressive detailing of them in eight pages in the back. However, since none of them is credited with writing a specific part of the volume, one can only assume that they were employed, as are most consultants, to read a few pages critically and to allow the use of their names. The real authorship of the volume remains a deep mystery.

The book is accompanied by a box of materials entitled "Involvement in Biology Today." Because the size and weight of the book alone are enough to cause posture distortions in those carrying it around, I had hoped the box would contain a truss in case of hernia. Instead, however, it contains a metabolism game, wherein one stops on pyruvic acid and is instructed to "shoot the dice for advice"; a packet of brine shrimp eggs; several geometric figures to cut out and assemble; and a 131-page "involvement" volume that has some of the characteristics of a laboratory manual. There is an instructor's resource package delineating performance objectives, references, and films for the various chapters. It includes a sequence of test items that indicate—contrary to the Barnum & Bailey approach used with the students—that the instructor is expected to examine on such prosaic items as the name of the longest extension from the cell body of the neuron; to ask for a description of the structure and function of meristematic cells and tissues; and to ascertain if the student recognizes the most common mutations as point mutations. The publisher thus appeals to both the interest in progressivism and relevance

on the part of the student and the desire to maintain the status quo on the part of the instructor.

This is a great big marshmallow of a book: a visual breakthrough; a book dominated by artists. Like a circus poster, it promises more than the show can deliver. The format makes the volume appear new, daring, and different, but the bulk of the text consists of truncated, traditional materials. It is a recitation of facts common to most texts. The scientific process and the inquiry approach fail to pervade the chapters. However, the sections on populations, behavior, and the human organism are contributions: the mystery author is to be commended for breakthroughs in these subjects and for his visual innovations but is to be faulted for letting too much hang out.

Failure to apply Occam's Razor and to exercise selection has created another encyclopedic text. The fate of this volume in the marketplace will be worth watching. If it is accepted, it could set a standard, of sorts, for the next several decades. Even its existence in trial form cannot but influence the design of biology books in the immediate future.

*William V. Mayer*  
University of Colorado  
Boulder

**For Young Readers**

OUR DIRTY AIR, by Sarah M. Elliott. 1971.  
Julian Messner Publisher, New York.  
64 p. \$3.95 (hardback).

This book is written for junior high school students and would also be suitable for some fifth- and sixth-graders. It describes all kinds of air pollution, together with the experiences of persons who have suffered from each kind. Good black-and-white photographs illustrate problems and solutions. A brief description of air pollution and weather explains a temperature inversion. Elliott then tells how living organisms are affected adversely by air pollution. Experiments using various pollutants on plants and animals are briefly described. The last three chapters discuss solutions to the air-pollution problem; here the reader is given hope for the future rather than a totally bleak outlook. This book would be a good addition to the junior-high-school library.

*Nancy Pardee*  
Mitchell High School  
Colorado Springs, Colo.

AISE-CE-BON, A RACCOON, by Lillian Brady. 1971. Harvey House, Inc., Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y. 128 p. \$4.50.

This is the story of a mother raccoon and her litter of four. The family's activities are traced throughout a year's