

biophysical techniques, are adequate condensations of topics receiving more extensive treatment in advanced biophysics textbooks. Inevitably, though, clarity is lost in the condensation, especially for biologists, who at this stage are less familiar with the physical principles. Although the author recommends the book for both biology and physics students, it is obviously written primarily for the physics student.

In general the illustrations are adequate, but some of the more complex drawings lack clarity. References at the end of each chapter and a glossary at the end of the book are helpful additions.

As an introductory book, it should be useful for physics students but not for biology students. It is likely that the excessive price may often prevent its adoption as a textbook for an introductory course.

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CONCISE COLOR ENCYCLOPEDIA, by Robin Kerrod. 1975. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (666 Fifth Ave., New York 10019). 256 p. \$9.95.

The publisher's global assertion that this is a "fascinating source of scientific information which comprehensively describes and illustrates every imaginable scientific topic" is questionable. In spite of the book's seeming exhaustiveness, there are too many topics in the realm of science that are not treated; for example, biology as a field, chemistry as a topic, earth science as an entity, physics as a science, and zoology as a science. There are no references at all to natural history.

Because the author claims that the book is written for "readers looking for an introductory overview which provides its readers with a simple but never simplistic volume which explores in an orderly and easy-to-use format every aspect of the physical sciences," the title is misleading. The publishers have designated the book for "young readers." No attempt is made to define "young people," but the book may be useful for the later years of junior high and senior high school.

Probably the criticisms expressed here are only so important as the specificity of the use to which the encyclopedia is put. If it is used as a very general and introductory reference, it will probably

be helpful for students in the grades mentioned above. For senior high school, the book would be useful for those less able students enrolled in introductory courses.

Because the book covers such a broad spectrum of subjects, it is difficult to determine its accuracy over all subject areas. There is no indication that specific content was scrutinized by experts in the various fields represented by the table of contents. The format of the book and its illustrations (both black-and-white and colored) are attractive. Type is large and discussions are interestingly written. Subjects are covered in a conversational manner not typical of encyclopedias, a feature that might be a welcome change for the reader.

The book, as a conveyor of information, does not compare favorably with traditional encyclopedias. However, this may not have been its purpose. The volume is inexpensive compared to other reference works. Its greatest value may be as a shelf reference in a junior high or senior high school.

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Zoology

VERTEBRATES: A LABORATORY TEXT, ed. by Norman K. Wessells and Elizabeth M. Center. 2nd ed., 1975. William Kaufman, Inc. (One First St., Los Altos, Calif. 94022). 228 p. Price not given.

A publication with two editors, six authors, and one illustrator has either nine opportunities to confuse or nine opportunities to clarify an issue. In this laboratory textbook the latter route was taken; the publication is a cohesive well-structured document.

The authors of the book and the illustrator were all undergraduate students at the time of the writing and the editors their professors. This in itself is a fairly unusual arrangement and it worked well.

The book is fairly limited in its breadth of coverage but detailed in its depth. Four topics are covered: the lower chordates, the structure-function of the dogfish shark, the structure-function of the nervous system (dogfish and sheep), and structure-function of the cat. It is primarily a laboratory guide to dissections, but because some

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