

Book Reviews

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EVOLUTION

EVOLUTION NOW: A CENTURY AFTER DARWIN

by John Maynard Smith (ed.). 1982. W.H. Freeman and Company (660 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94104). 239 p. \$19.95 hardback, \$9.95 softback.

Drawing upon a broad spectrum of journal articles, the editor has endeavored to present many of the recent advances in the scientific study of evolution as well as many of the controversial scientific issues being debated in this field of study. These contemporary studies, drawn chiefly from *Nature* and *Science*, include research on the origins of life and the genetic code, the current controversy on whether or not evolution was/is sudden or gradual, and such "non-molecular" concerns as the evolution of behavior. The creationism specter is assiduously avoided.

Introducing the book with a brief history of evolutionary ideas since the time of Darwin, the editor also prefaces each chapter with an overview of the specific topic to be addressed. Some personal perspectives and preferences are voiced as well in these sections and a discussion of some of the requisite terminology is presented. This latter task, however, could have been

performed with greater concern for the less-initiated reader.

The articles themselves, while there may be a few questions about the inclusion of some, serve to explicate in detail much of the current research on evolution. "Commentary" articles in the sections serve to explain other, more technical offerings, and all contribute to the development of an understanding of these complex research areas. Even with extensive examples, though, some prior knowledge is frequently needed to fully understand the ideas presented. This is especially true in an area of research not frequently considered, such as classification/cladistics.

Nonetheless, excellent seminal articles were selected to discuss the various topics. The complexity of the articles, however, requires that this book be viewed more as a supplementary reader for more advanced students of biology.

Most important, though, the inclusion of articles that argue different sides of the controversy is this book's chief asset. Addressing the "scientific enterprise" as well as specific research, this book offers a good indication of the vitality necessary in science as well as the need for an open exchange of ideas. In sum, this is a book packed with ideas and perspectives, and well worth the purchase price, despite the small print.

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EVOLUTION VERSUS CREATIONISM: THE PUBLIC EDUCATION CONTROVERSY

ed. by J. Peter Zetterberg. 1983. The Oryx Press (2214 North Central at Encanto, Phoenix, AZ 85004). XII + 516 p. \$37.50 hardback.

It is now clear that attempts by the "creationist movement" to require the inclusion of "creation science" in any public school classroom where evolution is taught have not been abandoned as a result of Judge William R. Overton's decision that enjoined implementation of Arkansas Act 590 (1981). In fact, there is continued pressure on local school boards, state governments, and federal agencies either to remove evolution from public school curricula entirely or give "equal time" to special creation. At the local level, much of the burden of defending public education systems against the intrusion of religious doctrine into the science classroom falls heavily on the classroom teachers of science. To be

equal to the challenge, science teachers must be well-versed in the intricacies of the ongoing dialogue.

Evolution Versus Creationism is an excellent primer for science educators, and any other people interested in increasing their knowledge and understanding of the issues involved in the evolution-creation controversy. The editor of the book has gathered an impressive collection of essays, many written by the leading adversaries, to present the scientific issues involved as well as the ethical and political realities of the situation. By providing several essays on an issue, each written from a different perspective, the editor creates the feeling of a debate and gives the reader the opportunity to study and evaluate the tactics used by the various participants. There are also extensive lists of references throughout the text that can be used as guides to further reading in any of the areas discussed. Thus, despite the high cost, this book should be "required reading" for any biologist or anyone else who is involved in, or anticipates involvement in, the controversy.

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SCIENTISTS CONFRONT CREATIONISM

ed. by Laurie R. Godfrey. 1st ed., 1983. W.W. Norton (500 Fifth Ave., NY 10110). 329 p. \$19.15 hardback.

Scientists Confront Creationism is a richly documented anthology by 15 notable scientists. It explains in clear and straightforward fashion exactly what scientists think about evolution and why. Through discussion of such matters as the age of the earth, fossil evidence, thermodynamics, natural selection, comparative biology, and molecular evidence for evolution, the science that undergirds evolution is presented. Additional discussion of the history of the creation science movement and the contemporary controversy regarding balanced treatment of special creation and evolution in the science curriculum of public schools speak to the value and timeliness of the work.

Essays written by Alice B. Kohoe, John R. Cole, and Robert J. Schadewald address the historical development of the creation science movement. Beginning with its origin from Scottish Realism during the late 18th century, the creation science movement is traced through the reaction to Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species*, the Scopes era, the advent