

Hartree that the resistance of journal editors to new ideas is by no means new (early reports of the discovery of cytochromes were dismissed as artefacts), a view confirmed by Boyer (p. 232). Racker assures us that he did a better job at reconstituting oxidative phosphorylation than he did at rebuilding clocks and watches (p. 265). The problems of biochemical discovery in the 1930's were brought home vividly by Straub, who points out that spectrophotometers, ion-exchange resins, ultracentrifuges, electron micro-

scopes, gel electrophoresis, radioactive tracers and even cold rooms were not available, nor was a commercial supply of pure biochemical reagents. We are indeed lucky today!

I would highly recommend this book. It is well presented and not exorbitantly priced by today's standards. My only reservation is that with present cut-backs in library budgets such books are unlikely to be purchased since they are not 'essential'.

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Oxygen and Oxy-Radicals in Chemistry and Biology

Edited by M. A. J. Rodgers and E. L. Powers

Academic Press; London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Toronto, 1981

xxx + 808 pages. £41.00

This book reports the proceedings of an international conference on oxygen and oxy-radicals held at the University of Texas, Austin, in May 1980. It has appeared reasonably quickly whilst avoiding the ugliness often associated with camera-ready presentation.

Like most conference proceedings, many of the papers report results that either have already been published in scientific journals, will shortly be published or will not survive refereeing! Some authors took the trouble to place their work in a broader context, whereas others did not. The book is still valuable however, principally because the discussions were recorded, edited and finally presented in a clear but

non-verbose form that captures the spirit of the meeting and reflects great credit on the editors. I was especially pleased to see the Fee/Fridovich discussions in print at last, since Fee's arguments have been presented without rebuttal in a number of other publications recently.

Most of the papers are chemical rather than biological, and so the title of the book is a little misleading. Nevertheless, I would recommend it as a good review of the chemical and *some* biological aspects of oxygen radical reactions. Who will buy it at £41.00 I am not sure. Even libraries are reacting against extortionate pricing in these times of financial stress.

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