

*Microbial Control of Pollution*, edited by J.C. Fry, G.M. Gadd, R.A. Herbert, C.W. Jones and I.A. Watson-Craik, Symposium 48, Society for General Microbiology, Cambridge University Press, Port Chester, NY, 1992, US\$ 110.00, 343 pp., ISBN 0-521-42078-4

This publication arose from a meeting of the Society for General Microbiology at the University of Cardiff in Wales in March 1992. The purpose of that meeting was to review the role which microorganisms play in controlling pollution. The broad structure of this symposium volume remains essentially similar to earlier ones. The initial chapters attempt to set the general scene as perceived by industrialists and academics. The remaining chapters cover detailed aspects of a range of special cases.

The overview of the book was found in the first chapter, entitled "Holistic Environmental Biotechnology". In that chapter, W. Verstraete and E. Top of the Laboratory of Microbial Ecology, University of Ghent (Belgium), "Center for Environmental Sanitation" write:

"The main areas in which environmental biotechnology is currently well established are discussed, i.e., potable water production, wastewater purification, solid waste treatment, soil and sediment clean-up, and air and off-gas treatment. Some new developments are discussed such as the introduction of organisms and genes in mixed cultures, the application of radical generating enzyme systems to degrade recalcitrant pollutants, and the use of bio-pesticides. The development of test-kits and test-systems, the production of stocks for back-up in case of major ecological disasters, and the marketing of biodegradable plastics are described as technical innovations in the field of biotechnology".

Given this overview, it is useful to list the several paper titles found in the text.

1. Holistic environmental biotechnology
2. Bioremediation of oil spills, with particular reference to the spill from the Exxon Valdez
3. Bacterial degradation of xenobiotics
4. Microbial control of heavy metal pollutants
5. Pollution control using microorganisms and magnetic separation
6. The degradation of cyanide and nitriles
7. Landfill co-disposal of wastewater and sludges
8. Aerobic and photosynthetic treatment of animal slurries
9. Anaerobic digestion of agricultural and food processing effluents
10. Nitrogen removal from water and waste
11. Land reclamation and restoration
12. Microbial degradation of synthetic polymer

Each of the several articles I read was very well researched and accompanied by an excellent and extensive bibliography.

GARY F. BENNETT

*Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management: A Technical Guide*, by G. Woodside, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, NY, 1993, US\$ 49.50, 383 pp., ISBN 0-471-54676-3