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A review of: ""Recombination at the DNA Level, Volume XLIX. Cold Spring Harbor Symposia on Quantitative Biology," Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York, March, 1985, 854 pp., illus., indexes, \$130.00." Elliot Evan Cazes

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BOOK REVIEW

"Recombination at the DNA Level, Volume XLIX. Cold Spring Harbor Symposia on Quantitative Biology," Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York, March, 1985, 854 pp., illus., indexes, \$130.00.

The principles of genetic linkage were first established by Thomas Hunt Morgan in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, in 1911. It has since been proven, many times over, that genetic recombination occurs by chromosomal crossing-over events. This discovery has had such profound effects that, even today, basic genetics is still learned by studying chromosomal recombination.

The advent of recombinant DNA technology has made it quite possible to study genetic recombination in micromolecular detail. At the 49th Annual Cold Spring Harbor Symposia, the 94 papers presented elaborated upon the many biochemical aspects of recombination. These papers covered such topics as chromosomal mechanics, restriction enzymes, DNA self-repair, and DNA site-specific recombination. Included in the subject matter are research strategies for a wide array of biological systems ranging from bacteriophages to mammalian cells and organelles.

This book is divided into 14 sections, each covering a general topic of interest to those in the field of recombinant DNA, and containing several articles presenting research on the particular topic. Although there is some repetition of subject matter within the topics presented, there are many innovative and extremely informative articles. Particularly noteworthy are two articles elaborating upon the mapping and function of the <u>gam</u> and <u>sot</u> genes of Phage Mu. There is an article on the meiotic roles of crossing-over, which presents the reader with a good general overview of the subject. There are also several fine articles on the roles of various enzymes in the processes of recombination. There are many other informative articles, but those I've mentioned are particularly well written and useful.

A major weakness of this book is that the 14 sections present topics which are somewhat broad. Some articles do not seem to fit well in the sections into which they have been placed. But, what this book lacks in organization and structure, it more than makes up for in the presentation of informative, up-to-date data. It is an extremely useful desk reference for the basic geneticist, as well as an up-to-date sourcebook of new laboratory techniques in molecular genetics. The reviewer heartily recommends it!

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