
Book Reviews

Readings from Scientific American: Genetics. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman 1981. 331 pp., Soft bound \$ 7.60.

This book contains a selection of papers published in "Scientific American" from 1948 to 1980. Twenty-nine articles cover a wide range of genetics from "Principles of heredity", "Chemical basis of heredity", "Genetic analysis", "Gene expression and regulation" to "Genetic transactions", "Evolution" and "Applied genetics". The chapters are introduced with remarks by C. I. Davern and are written without exception by outstanding authorities. The anthology starts with the classic paper of Mendel "Experiments in plant hybridization" (1865). The importance of the discoveries in molecular biology in the fifties by Watson, Crick and others is emphasized in several papers about the structure of DNA. They contain some repetitions but this is inavoidable in such an anthology of papers from different authors and different years. The articles are generously equipped with an abundance of very good illustrations. The quality of the pictures and schemes is excellent and enhances the understanding. Without doubt this book is a very good introduction for anyone who wants to become informed about the steps in the development of knowledge in this field. It is particularly suitable for undergraduate students for learning fundamental facts in genetics. A small bibliography of important literature gives further information on the subject matter of the articles. An assortment of "Scientific American" articles on genetics and extensive name and subject indices complete this recommendable book.

F. Siegemund, Halle/S.

Scandalios, J. G. (ed.): Developmental Genetics. Vol. 2, No 3. (4 issues a year). New York: Alan R. Liss 1982. Subscr. \$ 65.00.

This new journal, now entering 1982 with its third volume, has defined its own independent profile: the whole area of genetics dealing with gene expression during development and differentiation. The journal accepts preferentially experimental articles on gene action and interactions between genotypes in sexual and parasexual hybrids, in normal and experimentally manipulated systems. Although the editorial board includes developmental biologists working with plant systems, most of the papers deal with the *Drosophila* and mouse system. This fact confirms the strange experience that among many or most developmental biologists plant systems are unknown or not recognized. Even in many textbooks, developmental biology is synonymous with embryology of animal systems. I am sure that the experienced and well-known managing editor of the journal, Dr. John G. Scandalios, will attempt to rectify this situation; he himself has contributed a great deal to the knowledge of gene regulation in plant systems.

This very well-edited and well-printed journal excels in publications marked by their originality and high scientific quality. Emphasis is without doubt on the molecular, biochemical and physiological aspects of regulation during development. Developmental Genetics is becoming a foremost journal in a very progressive field. H. F. Linskens, Nijmegen