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 Book Reviews
 

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**Boehmer, H.V.; Haas, W.; Köhler, G.; Melchers, F.; Zeuthen, J. (eds.): Current Topics in Microbiology and Immunology. Vol. 100: T Cell Hybridomas. A Workshop at the Basel Institute for Immunology.** Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer 1982. xi+262 pp., 52 figs. Hard Bound DM 48,-/\$ 21.40.

Regardless of one's own field of scientific expertise, one cannot help but be aware of the impact that the construction of B-cell hybridomas which secrete monoclonal antibodies of defined specificities has had and will have on every aspect of basic and applied biomedical research. Although the recent application of the technique of somatic cell hybridization to the production of thymus-derived T-lymphocyte hybridomas is no doubt less widely known, it too offers tremendous potential, at least to immunologists and those subsets of molecular biologists and geneticists interested in lymphocyte structure and function. This book, a collection of 28 papers which were presented January 27-29 1982 during an international workshop at the world-renowned Swiss mecca for immunologists, offers the interested reader an excellent "state of the art" summary of T-cell hybridology. A main focus of the book is the application of T-cell hybridomas to immune regulation. Several articles deal with the function and molecular biology of antigen-specific suppressor and helper factors; others present new information about hybridoma-produced antigen nonspecific lymphokines that act on progenitors in the hemopoietic system and on other T cells. This compilation and the rapidity with which this reductionistic approach to immunobiology is moving makes it possible to visualize how, in the not-too-distant future, we will have more than a phenomenological grasp of T-lymphocyte heterogeneity and function. Whether we will ever be able to re-create and then understand the ecology of the whole immunological forest after we carefully examine each tree, is another matter entirely. Be that as it may, this well-prepared book in an excellent series of publications, is clearly an important volume for those working in this field. It should also prove stimulating to the non-immunologist who can read beyond the immuno-

logical implications with an eye to application of this facet of somatic cell hybridization and genetics to his or her own research program.

N. Cohen, Wageningen

**Jones, R.N.; Rees, H.: B-chromosomes.** London, New York, Sydney, Toronto: Academic Press 1982. viii+266 pp., several figs., several tabs. Hard bound £ 24.00.

In recent years considerable information on the cytogenetics of B chromosomes has accumulated but much of it remains scattered in individual papers, some of which are not easily accessible and often the results and conclusions presented by different workers are apparently contradictory. This book is an attempt to bring together all this information on the B chromosomes, present facts and figures, and conclusions and contradictions in a form intelligible to the under-graduate student and useful to a research scientist. The book achieves these objectives quite admirably.

The first six chapters are devoted to the occurrence, structure, inheritance, effects, population dynamics and ancestry and evolution of B chromosomes. The role and significance of B chromosomes in the genetic system have also been described and discussed. The B chromosome atlas forms the last and 7th chapter. The book adopts the view, with a convincing presentation of data and discussion, that B chromosomes have an adaptive value to the populations. However, the alternate viewpoint that B chromosomes are more in the nature of cellular or nuclear parasites has also been given due consideration. It has also been brought out that B chromosome effects should not be considered in isolation but in the wider context of the genome organization. Perhaps, the point of greatest interest to a plant breeder in the enigmatic B chromosomes is their potential ability to increase genetic recombination and to provide novel gene combinations. It is an excellent book and with enthusiasm I recommend it to all those who are interested in B chromosomes.

J. V. Pantulu, Waltair