

Wagner, H.; Bladt, S.; Zgainski, E.M.: Drogenanalyse. Dünnschichtchromatographische Analyse von Arzneidrogen. Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer 1983. 321 pp., 165 figs. in color.

The application of thin-layer-chromatography in chemical and pharmaceutical laboratories is already routine. This new documentation of distribution patterns (in colour) provides an excellent guideline for the analysis of drugs and plant extracts: not idealized schemes but colour photographs, on Agfachrome 50L, of real chromatograms, in visible and in ultra-violet light, run in different solvents, and treated with various reagents. In addition to the classical groups of drugs (aetherolea, alkaloids, anthracen-, arbutin, cumarin-, flavonoid-, glucoside-, saponine-, mustard oil-drugs), substances of the modern drug trade are also included. The result is a drug atlas in colour, which contributes to a further standardization of phytoextracts and preparations. It should be a standard reference for controlling the identity and purity of medical drugs on the market and in chemists' shops. The arrangement within the groups is according to plant species. All chromatograms comprise authentic reference substances. Detection systems, specific spray reagents are described in detail so that other handbooks have not to be consulted. The layout of the book is excellent, as is the printing quality. The english edition came out in 1984.

H. F. Linskens, Nijmegen

Lewontin, R.: Human Diversity. Oxford: W. H. Freeman 1984. 179 pp., 101 figs. Hard bound £ 10.95.

In "Human diversity" R. Lewontin shows that each human being differs from all others because of the interaction of genetic differences, environmental differences, and chance events that occur during development.

The first chapter introduces the human variety (together with a photographic essay). The subsequent four chapters focus on the nature and function of genetic material and the genetic basis of simple polymorphism. In chapter 6 variation in the human population and interaction of genes and environmental differences in mental traits, focusing on the discussion of the heritability of intelligence, are discussed. The diversity among groups (several populations, races, as well as male and female) is demonstrated in chapter 8. The final chapter deals with the evolution of human diversity.

This book is well-illustrated but a bibliography is omitted. It is an introduction for anyone (non-specialists) with an interest in the population genetics of man.

F. H. Herrmann, Erfurt