

story. It is also reassuring to find that fortune does indeed sometimes favour the brave: surely someone who sets out to test hundreds of potential markers deserves the luck of detecting a linkage with one of the first 13. Even so the family studies (including 750 members of a family of 3500, which includes 87 living patients) represent a formidable amount of work.

Altogether this is a most impressive book, which should be of value and interest to all molecular geneticists.

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Regulation of the immune system. Harvey Cantor, Leonard Chess, and Eli Sercarz (eds). Alan R. Liss, Inc., New York. 1984. Pp. xxxi+976. Price £122.00.

This is a massive volume of almost 1000 pages covering the UCLA Symposium on Molecular and Cellular Biology held in March 1984. The emphasis of the Symposium was on cellular immunology and the regulatory interaction of cells which modulate the immune response. Over the past few years the application of the techniques of genetic engineering to the cell surface structures of lymphocytes has proved extremely fruitful. We now have a much greater understanding of the organisation and expression of the genes in the major histocompatibility complex and of the receptor for antigen on T cells. Many of the papers in the Symposium presented information on the molecular nature of the membrane molecules on lymphocytes.

Over 500 people attended the meeting and this volume contains about 95 different articles presented in a camera copy format. Reports of meetings of this type allow those who did not attend to get some insight into what occurred during the meeting. However, it is important to remember that the articles will all appear in due course in edited journals, but it is useful to have a snapshot of the current work by a cross-section of the researchers in a particular area, in one volume. Inevitably, as the meeting was held in America, there is a preponderance of American speakers and some of the most important European laboratories were not represented. As there is only a limited amount of predigestion of the information provided through workshop summaries, this book would be difficult for non-specialists in cellular immunology. This is the sort of book which libraries should be encouraged to buy so that immunology research groups can have access to it.

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Collections of frozen tissues: Value, management, field and laboratory procedures, and directory of existing collections. H. C. Dessauer and M. S. Hafner (eds). Published by Association of Systematics Collections, University of Kansas. 1984. Pp. 74. Price \$7.50 incl. P/P.

This short book, based on the proceedings of a workshop held in Philadelphia, May 1983, is addressed to "researchers, research administrators and funding agency officials in all fields of basic, applied and forensic science who are concerned with the nature and quality of America's frozen tissue collections as a national resource". It contains chapters on the values of frozen tissue collections for purposes ranging from evolutionary studies through forensic studies to gene pool preservation, chapters on procedures for cryopreservation of tissues and advice on curation of frozen tissue banks, a chapter on the (American) regulations governing acquisition and transport of frozen tissues, a (partial) directory of worldwide frozen tissue collections and ends with recommendations for a national plan for making better use of America's collections of frozen tissues.

All individuals, not only Americans, who maintain or contribute to frozen tissue collections will benefit from reading this book. In it they will find many useful tips and procedures for maintaining biological materials in an undenatured state, from time of collection to final placement in long term frozen storage. The authors, unsurprisingly, favour "ultracold" freezers (-70°C to -90°C) or liquid nitrogen for storage, although they note that such space is expensive to purchase and maintain. However, it is worth pointing out that low temperature freezers operating at -55°C to -60°C are now available for around £600, and these present a very useful compromise between the much more expensive ultracold freezers and the cheaper, but less effective, -20°C household freezers.

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Reshaping life. G. J. V. Nossal. Cambridge University Press. 1985. Pp. 158. Price £6.95, \$11.95 (US).

No matter what people might tell you, reading is really a chore. For every hundred pages of boldface there are very few memorable phrases, let alone sentences. And academics write in styles that definitely do not "purge the melancholy". So the arrival of yet another book, dedicated to the layman and expounding the secrets of genetic engineering, and the potential benefits of such labours, made me retreat into the autobiography of Walter Hammond. Perhaps I had been immunised by previous exposure to rather poor examples of this genre; however, I should not have prejudged this book.