regulating particular technologies; some of public attitudes to certain new technologies. Although there are many interesting papers, they do not cohere as well as they might. But they do illustrate how misleading it is to try to understand the extent of usage of particular technologies using a concept of 'resistance', even if, as in this collection, 'resistance' is seen as inevitable and even healthy. It is significant that several contributors to the volume do not like the term 'resistance'.

As with the Luddites of old, it is not just new technology that is opposed — so is old technology; there are great differences in attitudes to different sorts of technology; and, furthermore, people do not usually oppose technology as such — they oppose particular consequences of technology. 'Resistance to new technology' is a misleading heading under which to discuss the usage of technology: the most obvious response of people to technology is to demand more, rather than to resist or oppose it. The most important limits to the diffusion of technology are economic ones. Cultures, far from lagging behind technology, demand new technologies and even imagine them before they are created. The creation of new technologies and the extent of their use are inevitably highly complex issues inextricably mixed up with economics, politics and society. But resistance to particular uses of particular machines is a universal and necessary feature of modern societies: we could not cope with everything that has ever been invented. □

David Edgerton is at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, Imperial College, Sherfield Building, London SW7 2AZ, UK.

Gap filling

Douglas W. Burbank

Tectonics of Sedimentary Basins. Edited by Cathy J. Busby and Raymond V. Ingersoll. *Blackwell Science*: 1995. Pp. 579. £49.50, \$69.95.

ALTHOUGH there are many books by sedimentologists and stratigraphers on the depositional patterns within sedimentary basins, few volumes concentrate primarily on the tectonic setting, structural characteristics and tectonic evolution of these basins. *Tectonics of Sedimentary Basins* sets out to redress the balance. It contains contributions from many of the pioneers of modern studies of a tectonically broad array of basins. Some might argue that structural geologists would be better qualified to provide such a tectonic framework, but the authors have done an admirable job of synthesizing a truly

diverse literature in order to present clearly written and well illustrated summaries of 12 different tectonic classes of principal basin types. Because most of the chapters are by stratigraphers, there is a heightened awareness of the sensitive interplay of tectonics and sedimentation and the important role of the stratigraphic record in defining the details of tectonic histories.

Most of the chapters begin with a brief history of the ideas and nomenclature relevant to the basin type of interest, followed by a description of the main tectonic elements defining the basin setting. More structural detail and variations on the basic tectonic architecture are given before a discussion of specific examples from around the world. Sometimes the examples read more like a catalogue of global occurrences than intriguing illustrations of alternative themes.

On the other hand, several settings are treated by different authors from complementary vantage points. This enhances one's appreciation of the complexities and ambiguities of many well studied basins. Inevitably, the depositional systems within these basins are also described. But unlike many more stratigraphically oriented texts, the authors tend to concentrate on the tectonic controls exerted on depositional systems at a variety of temporal and spatial scales. Moreover, much of what is known about the tectonic history of these basins comes from stratigraphic study of their sedimentary fill. These stratigraphic descriptions therefore provide insight into the way in which such data are used to reconstruct tectonic events. The book is also enlivened by authors not afraid to express their opinions of earlier work or to examine controversial interpretations.

This is a wonderful reference book for anyone interested in sedimentary basins or who would profit from a bibliographic trove of more than 2,000 entries. The amount of attention given to tectonic settings varies from author to author, but even contributors who provide a less thorough geodynamical description offer lucid syntheses of the main elements and controls of basin-filling histories. There is some overlap among chapters because different authors deal with tectonically related settings; and a few of the figures reproduced from other studies are almost illegible. But overall this is an up-to-date and original compendium that embraces a spectrum of tectonic and settings in an uncommonly complete way. It will serve as a valuable reference well into the next decade. □

Douglas W. Burbank is in the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90089-0740, USA.

New in paperback

Science on Trial: The Case for Evolution

by Douglas J. Futuyma. W. H. Freeman, £21.95 (pbk). This book first appeared in 1982, when the issue of whether both evolution and creationism should be taught in schools was in the news. The author aims "to show that creationism lacks both evidence and any claim to scientific respectability, and to place the conflict in its larger social, political, and educational context". A postscript lists important new developments bearing on the contents of each chapter.

In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity

by Daniel J. Kevles. Harvard University Press, \$16.95, £10.50. A classic account of the history of eugenics, now with a new preface.

Pride and a Daily Marathon

by Jonathan Cole. MIT Press, \$15, £11.95. A moving and informative story about a young man suddenly struck down by a rare neurological illness that deprived him of all sensation below the neck. The author, his doctor, brilliantly interweaves biography, science and philosophy. "A model of popular scientific writing" (John Marshall, *Nature* **356**, 636; 1992).

The Beak of the Finch: Evolution in Real Time

by Jonathan Weiner. Vintage, £8.99. A wonderfully detailed account of the work of Peter and Rosemary Grant, who for more than two decades have been studying the evolution of 'Darwin's finches' in the Galapagos Islands. "The style and presentation of this book are first class. It is one of the best pieces of science writing that I have read in a long while" (Jeremy Greenwood, *Nature* **371**, 27; 1994).

Correction

In the editing of Leonard Hayflick's recent review of two books on ageing (*Nature* **376**, 398; 1995), several changes were made that inadvertently introduced inaccuracies or altered the author's intended meaning. The second sentence should have read "We have learned how to eliminate most causes of youthful death, allowing most people to live long enough to experience ageing — a phenomenon that, teleologically speaking — we were never intended to see"; the second sentence of the last paragraph should have read "How long individuals will then survive depends on entropy, a process characterized by increased vulnerability to disease, predation and accidents"; and the author's correct address is Department of Anatomy, University of California at San Francisco, 36991 Greencroft Close, PO Box 89, The Sea Ranch, California 95497, USA. Our apologies to Professor Hayflick for these mistakes.