

REVIEWS

REPRODUCTION IN MAMMALS. 4. REPRODUCTIVE PATTERNS. Edited by C. R. Austin and R. V. Short, Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1972. viii plates and 156 figures and an Index. Hardback £3.40; also in paperback.

REPRODUCTION IN MAMMALS. 5. ARTIFICIAL CONTROL OF REPRODUCTION. Edited by C. R. Austin and R. V. Short, Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1972. x plates and 152 figures and an Index. Hardback £3.40; also in paperback.

These two volumes represent the final addition to a series on "Reproduction in mammals". The publishers' flyleaf notes state that the series is intended primarily for undergraduates reading Biology, Zoology, Physiology, Medicine, Agriculture and Veterinary Science, but also as a summary treatment of mammalian reproduction for more advanced students and research workers. In effect, these two volumes are admirable up-to-date commentaries on the more recent development and social implications of research in mammalian reproduction. They are likely to prove most valuable as the bases of undergraduate seminars but their value to more specialised and advanced research workers seems doubtful, since they are neither sufficiently detailed in themselves nor do they contain a comprehensive bibliography. The chapters are written by different authors, albeit authorities on their chapter topic, which leads to some unevenness of treatment and style. Both books contain a considerable number of figures and line drawings but the several authors have not used such aids to the same extent, which accentuates the unevenness of style. Indeed, some of the line drawings would surely have been better as photographs and others omitted altogether since they achieve little but break up the text.

Apart from these criticisms, which are more of detail than substance, the two Editors are to be congratulated on producing two most useful volumes, particularly for those concerned with teaching. In particular, special mention is deserved for the final two chapters of volume 5, written by Dr Short, and Dr Austin respectively, which deal with "Reproduction and human society" and "The ethics of manipulating human reproduction". The issues raised in these two chapters require much wider informed debate by all members of human society than they have so far received. These books should find general and welcome acceptance by all those concerned with biological and social education.

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THE BIOCHEMICAL GENETICS OF MAN. By D. J. H. Brock and O. Mayo. Academic Press, London, New York. pp. 725+70 text-figures. £9.80.

There are already available informative books on human biochemical genetics, and on the metabolic basis of genetic disorders. Therefore, it may be quite reasonably asked what has a new book in this area to contribute. As far as the book reviewed here is concerned the answer to this question is that it presents a balanced integration of basic biochemical and genetic concepts, *e.g.* polymorphism, selection and evolution, and shows (where relevant) how