

REVIEWS

GENETICS AND THE ANIMAL CELL. M. Terzi. Wiley, London, 1974. pp. 261 + 94 text figures. £6.50.

His previous experience in microbial genetics has clearly given Dr Terzi an unusual perspective on cancer research. He has developed an original view of the subject here which deserves consideration. It is that tissue cultures reflect a genuine parasexual variability of eukaryotic cells, generated by cell fusion or division failure to form a tetraploid line which is slowly corrected to a near-diploid state by the preferential elimination of some chromosomes and selective mortality of some karyotypes. During this evolution of somatic cells, some could escape from the normal controls and proliferate to form tumours or cancers. This theory appears to be the main objective of a pleasantly written review which touches on aspects of tissue cultures, cell fusion, differentiation, karyotypes, repetitive DNA sequences and gene amplification. Such a wide review is bound to be selective or superficial, and thus risks being misleading.

This is not a book for beginners, who might baulk at unexplained terms (plating efficiency, multi-hit death rate, chalcones, lectins, HAT, etc.), and wonder why so many borrowed figures are incompletely explained by legends and ignored in the text. It is not a book for experts either, for they would demand a closely reasoned argument with at least enough references to establish the main assertions. Even the rest of us may wonder at the selection and interpretation of some examples. For my part, I do not believe the author's contention that XXXY *Drosophila* is an intersex, that Bar-eye is an inactivated gene, or that gamete atresia must be a selective process. I do not share the author's complete acceptance of certain unconventional interpretations concerning nuclear transplantation, ribosomal RNA genes and evolution by gene duplication. I doubt the author's wisdom in drawing general conclusions from *t*-alleles of mice, and his evidence for asserting that dental disease is the commonest cause of death in wild animals. Consequently and perhaps unfairly, I cannot rely on the author's judgment that an appreciable proportion of my body necessarily consists of aneuploid cells which represent a statistical risk to my health.

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E. P. FILMSTRIPS—AN INTRODUCTION TO GENETICS. Educational Productions Ltd., Yorkshire, 1974, with notes prepared by J. H. Elliot.

The three film strips reviewed here, "Sex Determination, Sex Linkage and Influence" (33 frames), "Population Genetics" (44 frames) and "DNA, RNA and Mutation" (40 frames), form part of a series of six on "An Introduction to Genetics". Each strip is accompanied by a small booklet of a dozen or so pages giving some explanatory notes about each of the frames. The film strips are of American origin, originally published by Eye