isms of DNA repair, rational drug design etc. The treatment is thoughtful and there is much meat here.

The area of protein-nucleic acid interactions has of course burgeoned dramatically since the first edition, and a major revision of this chapter was warranted. Given the volume of material now available, it was of particular interest to see what line would be taken in this new section. What we are offered is a selective and very readable account, in some respects more of an essay on the subject than a text. The improved presentation with colour plates comes into its own here, providing essential support for a proper appreciation of the structural elements of the molecular recognition. It was also refreshing to see RNA-protein interactions, as exemplified by tRNA synthetases, brought within the purview of the chapter. Inspection of the bibliography suggests that, with the exception of the fascinating enzymes that cause nucleosides to 'flip-out' of the helix, the authors have not taken full note of the most recent findings. This is not in itself a major problem: the case studies discussed are mostly so well characterised that although recent and future work will add to our understanding, little will have to be taken away from what is presented here. An important exception to this is the TATA-box binding protein where discussion of the structure (published in 1993) of the protein complexed to a TATA-element is omitted; this shows that binding elicits a dramatic distortion of the DNA, and that the protein does not simply straddle B-DNA as had been supposed.

At first sight, the final chapter looks something of a pot-pourri of topics, but in fact it provides very useful capsule summaries of a good selection of relevant techniques, and their application to studies on nucleic acids.

In summary, despite some minor shortcomings, this is an attractive and valuable book. In preparing the first edition, the authors were correct in identifying a gap in the coverage of the subject; this second edition confirms how well they have been able to remedy this deficiency. This is a book for the student, undergraduate or graduate, who wishes to make the connections between the subjects; it is also a very valuable source for the teacher and researcher in this area. As Richard Roberts, who wrote the foreword, says, its proper home is close at hand on the bookshelf.

JIM HOGGETT
Department of Biology
University of York
P.O. Box 373
York YO1 5YW
U.K.

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