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Review Of "History Of The Life Sciences. An Annotated Bibliography" By P. Smit

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Review

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For the independent learner, each textbook has included at the beginning a statement of objectives and pre-knowledge requirements, and a self-assessment test at the end of each book. The objectives are also printed on the enclosed masking card accompanying each book — a constant reminder of the textbook's objectives. All books are briefly introduced, often with a historical perspective and concise instructions on how to use the programmed text and accompanying visual aids (film strips, 8 mm film loop projectors) and have a list of recommended readings at the end. A handy Tutor's Guide accompanies the series; it is necessary in adapting all or any part of the course since it contains the course objectives, organization, and transcripts of the tape commentaries accompanying some of the books.

The Ecology Game Pack to be used with Book 4, complete with Tutor's and Student Guide, is not to be used as a substitute for ecological field work, but is designed to serve as an important and interesting adjunct to this unit, presenting an ecological problem to students which they try to resolve within a condensed framework of time and space. This is a pleasant diversion from the usual programmed learning textbooks and a must if using Book 4. Several of the textbooks have separate audio-visual aids, which are necessary if the programmed book is to be completely successful. With the forthcoming Books 10, 11 and 12, covering the last major areas of study — Nerves, Hormones, and Genetics, respectively — this series provides a major, but not complete, self-paced biology course for beginning university students.

KENNETH D. LASER, *Biological Sciences, State University of New York, Stony Brook*

McGraw-Hill Dictionary of the Life Sciences.

Editor in Chief, Daniel N. Lapedes. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York. \$19.95. xiv + 907 p. + A1-A38 (separately paginated appendix); ill.; no index. 1976.

This dictionary contains 20,000 entries from some 37 fields of science. Many of the terms were previously included in the *McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms*. The 800 illustrations could have been set into the text, instead of into overly wide margins, without sacrificing clarity, and resulting perhaps in a lower price or permitting the use of a larger typeface.

The definitions are generally concise, with many of the terms used therein being defined elsewhere in the volume — an important feature in any dictionary.

Occasional definitions are more obscure than necessary. In the definition of ribosomal ribonucleic acid, there is no indication the "S" stands for "Svedberg." I find a listing for "S see Sulfur" — not pertinent to this usage. "Svedberg" is listed as a unit of sedimentation coefficient with no indication that it is abbreviated "S." The usefulness of the work would be increased, if these terms were linked.

I would recommend this dictionary to those who need broad coverage of the technical terms of the life sciences. It may sacrifice depth for breadth, but it is easy to use.

DORIS WILLIAMS, *Biology Library, State University of New York, Stony Brook*

HISTORY OF THE LIFE SCIENCES. *An Annotated Bibliography.*

By Pieter Smit; with a Foreword by Frans Verdoorn. Hafner Press, New York; Collier Macmillan, Canada. \$55.00. xii + 1, 2-1071; index of personal names. 1974.

Pieter Smit has done a remarkable job of collecting and organizing over 4000 titles of interest to historians of the life sciences, philosophers, biologists, and members of the medical profession. Each title has a summary review of about 90 words.

The text is composed of two chapters. In the first (74 pages), Smit includes general references and tools useful in historical studies. Chapter 2 (444 pages) deals with the historiography of the life and medical sciences. It consists of four main parts: the philosophy of the life sciences and their historical aspects; historiography of the life and medical sciences during the ancient and medieval periods: chronological and ethnographical; historiography of the life and medical sciences during the Renaissance and later periods, according to subject and including general histories; and a selected list of biographies and bibliographies of famous biologists and medical men.

The extensive, thoughtful, and painstaking efforts that clearly went into this annotated bibliography have produced a volume of which Smit and the publishers can be proud. It is an invaluable reference aid to research and related activities in the history of the life and medical sciences, as well as in various related aspects of biohistory. The book is a must for libraries and for scholars in the history of science who can afford the rather hefty price.

JOHN B. JENKINS, *Biology, Swarthmore College*

GREAT SCIENTISTS SPEAK AGAIN.

By Richard M. Eakin. University of California Press, Berkeley, California. \$6.95. viii + 119 p.; ill.; no index. 1975.

What a great idea for enlivening an introductory biology course! Professor Eakin, after some years of teaching introductory zoology at Berkeley, found the attention of his students beginning to wander, and undertook to introduce each section of his lectures with a presentation by a great biologist who founded or contributed in some essential way to the development of a major field. The fields chosen were (1) the anatomy of circulation, (2) the physiology of digestion, (3) experimental embryology, (4) genetics, (5) the germ theory of disease, and (6) organic evolution. The respective proponents were William Harvey, Wil-