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Figs. 1—4 at the end of the issue.

BOOK REVIEW

OMENN, G. S., HOLLAENDER, A. (ed.): GENETIC CONTROL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS. Basic Life Sci., Vol. 28. — Plenum Press, New York—London 1984. 408 pp. US $ 55.00.

The effects and ultimate fate of environmental pollutants are topics of intense interest to scientist, regulatory agencies, chemical manufacturers, and private citizens. The aim of this publication, based on lectures presented at a conference held in Seattle, Washington (1983) was to assess the effective control of environmental pollutants through the use of microorganisms, especially genetically engineered ones. The introductory papers deal with the microbial degradation of environmental toxicants, such as 2,4,5-T, chlorophenols, organomercurials, halogenated hydrocarbons *etc.* The core of the book focuses on genetic approaches applied to destroy chemical pollutants. It is known that DNA-plasmids play a major role in genetic engineering. Several papers discuss the role of plasmids in encoding degradation of toxicants in aquatic environment, in regulating resistance to heavy metals, as cloning vectors and as carriers of duplicated genes which after mutation can generate new degradative functions. Further topics covered include the application of genetic engineering to industrial waste treatment and industrial pollution control. The likelihood that there may be undesired consequences of the release of novel genotypes into natural ecosystems should also be considered. Several papers thus discuss the possible ecological consequences of genetic engineering. The concluding reviews familiarizes the reader with the success of industrial microbial biosynthesis and with the modern tools of genetic manipulations. Each session is accompanied by an informal panel discussion.

14 abstracts of poster presentations are annexed to the publication.

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