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## Science Notes - *Book News: Biotechnology: Microbes and the Environment*

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## SCIENCE NOTES

### **Book News: *Biotechnology: Microbes and the Environment***

*Microbes and the Environment* is the third "BriefBook" to be published by the Center for Science Information (CSI). CSI is a non-profit organization with the goals of improving decision makers' basic level of science understanding so that they can make informed decisions and better educate the public.

I found the book delightful for several reasons. First, it is very readable. The technical vocabulary is there, but it is handled either in a very humane manner in text or in the glossary. The book also has a seemingly logical order, yet is not absolutely sequential. A very good internal cross-referencing (both forward and back) encourages readers to follow a thread of interest wherever it may lead.

The book is well researched and its scientific "correctness" is documented by a very impressive list of "Expert Sources." The worldwide balance of the resource base insures an objective overview of the issues with which the book deals. Lastly, the book is timely. Not a sensational, headline-grabbing, public inflaming publication, it is instead loaded with insight into science of the present and future. While many of us talk about "scientific literacy," this book does something about it.

But why take my word for it? Thanks to its generosity and commitment to excellence in science education in Iowa, the Microbial Environmental Services, Inc., an "arm's-length" subsidiary of Pioneer Hi-Bred in Des Moines, has offered to make a copy of this book available to every high school science teacher in Iowa. If you did not pick up a copy at the recent Iowa Science Teachers Section conference, you may obtain one by contacting Ms. Dawn Bowman, Microbial Genetics, 4601 Westown Parkway, Suite 120, West Des Moines, IA 50265. Correspondence should be on school stationery and teachers should ask that the book be sent to their school address. Check it out!

Witt, Steven C. 1991. *Biotechnology: Microbes and the Environment*. Center for Science Information, 4254 20th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. (The two "BriefBooks" previously published by CSI are *Biotechnology and Genetic Diversity* and *Genetic Engineering of Plants*.)

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