strictly new topics in the true sense, since they may have been used for a number of years, they do provide a good starting point for those who want to commence any of these techniques.

Each article provides a review covering the theory and applications of the topic. In general the reviews are well written with good informative introductions. This is followed, in most cases, by useful methodology sections. Where these are given they are clearly and explicitly providing a step by step guide for the various techniques with the chapters on non-radioactive labelling and detection and peptide nucleic acid providing good examples of this. As would be expected in some chapters this section does not include detailed protocols for all the given applications and it is understandable that in a volume of this size that everything could not be included. However, all chapters are followed by a useful reference section that would point the reader in the desired direction for any given application.

In general I found this book interesting and to a large extent I thought that it fulfilled the aims that were specified for the series, at least for the majority of the techniques included in it. However, it is worthwhile to note that in most chapters the latest reference given is from 1994. Therefore the reader may need to consult further references to be completely abreast of further advances in these techniques. Nevertheless the text does provide a good helpful source for familiarisation with these topics.

Elizabeth M. Hoey
molecular basis of life and the application of that knowledge in genetics, medicine, and agriculture.

The book is highly recommended for everybody who is interested in this area of research and will provide introductory information to both newcomers and experts interested in the field. As a reference source it is highly valuable and recommendable both for libraries and for laboratory use.

Gunna Christiansen


This is the third edition of a two volume book which has already become an institution -- Fields Virology. Few areas in medical science have advanced as rapidly as virology, a discipline that is less than 100 years old, although viruses have infected a range of hosts including man from the dawn of history.

The two volumes (running to a total of 2950 pages excluding the index) provide a balanced and comprehensive view of virology ranging from the origin of viruses, molecular aspects of viruses to their aetiology in a variety of diseases and prevention of infection. The first part covering general virology spans some 600 pages and includes the general principles of taxonomy, viral genetics, evolution, pathogenesis, epidemiology, immune response, diagnostic virology, antiviral agents, vaccines and excellent general chapters on plant viruses, insect viruses, viruses of yeast, fungi and parasitic microorganisms and bacteriophages. The remainder of the text is devoted to specific virus families and unclassified agents, crowned by a superb treatise on prions. The references are encyclopaedic and remarkably up-to-date. The book is profusely illustrated with outstanding line diagrams and good electron micrographs. Histological photographs and clinical photographs are reproduced in black-and-white and their value is thus very limited.

The skilled and perspicacious selection of authors, all of whom are experts in their field, ensured an outstanding book of high scholarship and a triumph in living testimony to Bernard Fields, who died in 1995 as the Third Edition went to press.

Arie J. Zuckerman

Booklist no. 132


The most recently published Booklists are the following:

No. 120 (October, 1994) FEBS Lett. 352, 403.
No. 121 (November, 1994) FEBS Lett. 354, 244.

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No. 130 (March, 1996) FEBS Lett. 381, 266.