



Vignettes: Book Promotion

[Oliver] Lodge was an early convert to Maxwell's electromagnetic theory. He bought a copy of the *Treatise [on Electricity and Magnetism]* after hearing it praised at the 1873 meeting of the British Association [for the Advancement of Science]; the bookseller, he said, grumbled that it was "a product of the over-educated."

—Bruce J. Hunt, in *The Maxwellians* (Cornell University Press)

In Philadelphia almost everybody reads "The Voice of the Dolphins," five stories of political and social satire by Leo Szilard. (In second printing Simon & Schuster; paperback \$1) on sale in the Harvard Coop. If you do not buy it to-day you will forget it.

—Advertising copy written by Szilard, as quoted by William Lanouette in *Genius in the Shadows: A Biography of Leo Szilard, the Man Behind the Bomb* (Scribner)

keeping pace, a lag that contributed to the financial disaster of the 1970s as utilities had to "backfit" safety features.

Containing the Atom, although smoothly written, is hardly casual reading. But anyone who has followed one or more of the issues in the debate over nuclear energy will find chapters of interest here, as most of the abiding questions were first asked in the 1960s. What is striking is how few had been resolved, and how much the technology and its regulation were still evolving, in 1971. Anyone interested in the interplay of democracy, technology, and expertise will be stimulated by these stories.

One of the book's lessons is that skeptics have an important role to play in the development of risky technologies. Civilian nuclear reactors, in an age when fossil-fuel prices and energy costs were falling, lacked the urgency of the wartime Manhattan Project, but they were nonetheless promoted with an impatient enthusiasm that dismissed opponents as ill-informed or malevolent (communists, for instance, or agents of the coal industry). The AEC tended to dismiss not only protestors (who in the 1960s were often less informed than those of the '70s) but journalists who pointed out the lack of evidence for nuclear energy's safety and cheapness (*Science*, for one, published some skeptical reportage) and unconvinced scientists (including many who worked within the AEC's vast empire). In too many instances the skeptics proved right.

In the absence of solid evidence about the effects of a technology, one can only base predictions on one's intuitions about how the world works: about the rapidity of technological development, about the competence of experts, about the ability of private corporations to balance profits and public safety, about the willingness of gov-

ernment regulators to oversee those corporations. Walker tells the story of people who, albeit with frequent exceptions, had an unquestioning faith in technology, experts, electric utilities, and government regulators. Other voices, of those who lacked that faith, were systematically excluded. But it is also the story of the skeptics' persistence, so that by 1971, whether right or wrong, they could no longer be ignored. There can be no simple explanation for the emotional controversy over nuclear energy, but Walker has provided much valuable raw material for building a complex one.

James M. Jasper

Department of Sociology,
New York University,
New York, NY 10003

Books Received

An Agenda of Science for Environment and Development into the 21st Century. J. C. I. Dooge *et al.*, Eds. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992. viii, 331 pp., illus. \$69.95; paper, \$34.95. Based on a conference, Vienna, Nov. 1991.

Alcohol Abuse Treatment. Ronald R. Watson, Ed. Humana, Totowa, NJ, 1992. xii, 327 pp., illus. \$59.50. Drug and Alcohol Abuse Reviews, vol. 3.

Chemical Sensitivity. A Guide to Coping with Hypersensitivity Syndrome, Sick Building Syndrome and Other Environmental Illnesses. Bonnie L. Matthews. McFarland, Jefferson, NC, 1992. xvi, 275 pp., illus. \$29.95.

The Chemistry of Heterocyclic Compounds. Vol. 48, Pyrroles. Part 2, The Synthesis, Reactivity, and Physical Properties of Substituted Pyrroles. R. Alan Jones, Ed. Wiley, New York, 1992. xvi, 628 pp., illus. \$225.

The Development of Mathematics. E. T. Bell. 2nd ed. Dover, New York, 1992. xiv, 637 pp. Paper, \$3.95. Dover Books Explaining Science. Reprint, 1945 ed.

Differential Manifolds. Antoni A. Kosinski. Academic Press, San Diego, CA, 1993. xvi, 248 pp., illus. \$59.95. Pure and Applied Mathematics, vol. 138.

Elegant Technology. Economic Prosperity from an Environmental Blueprint. Jonathan A. Larson. Riverdale, Westwood, MA, 1992. xii, 271 pp., illus. Paper, \$19.95.

Emerging Infections. Microbial Threats to Health in the United States. Joshua Lederberg, Robert E. Shope, and Stanley C. Oaks, Jr., Eds. National Academy Press, Washington, DC, 1992. xiv, 294 pp., illus. Paper, \$34.95.

Fracture Mechanics of Ceramics. Vol. 10, Fracture Fundamentals, High-Temperature Deformation, Damage, and Design. R. C. Bradt *et al.*, Eds. Plenum, New York, 1992. xii, 655 pp., illus. \$129.50. From a symposium, Nagoya, Japan; July 1991.

Global Biogeochemical Cycles. Samuel S. Butcher *et al.*, Eds. Academic Press, San Diego, CA, 1992. xvi, 377 pp., illus. Paper, \$24.95. International Geophysics Series, vol. 50.

God and the Astronomers. Robert Jastrow. 2nd ed. Norton, New York, 1992. 149 pp., illus. \$18.95.

Human Evolution. Alan Bilsborough. Blackie Academic (Chapman and Hall), Glasgow, U.K., 1992. x, 258 pp., illus. \$75.50; paper, \$34. Tertiary Level Biology.

Illustrating C. ANSI/ISO Version. Donald Alcock. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992. x, 214 pp., illus. Spiral bound, \$19.95.

In Our Own Image. Building an Artificial Person. Maureen Caudill. Oxford University Press, New York, 1992. x, 242 pp., illus. \$23.

Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers. Arthur Cleveland Bent. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1992. xvi, 263 pp., illus., + plates. \$29.95.

Likelihood. A. W. F. Edwards. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 1992. xx, 275 pp., illus. Paper, \$15. Corrected reprint, 1984 ed.

Mathematics of Classical and Quantum Physics. Frederick W. Byron, Jr. and Robert W. Fuller. Dover, New York, 1992. 2 volumes bound as one, x, 661 pp., illus. Paper, \$16.95. Addison-Wesley Series in Advanced Physics. Revised reprint, 1969 ed. (Vol. 1) and 1970 ed. (Vol. 2).

Meanings and Uses of Material Culture. Barbara J. Little and Paul A. Shackel, Eds. Society for Historical Archaeology, Tucson, AZ, 1992. iv, 133 pp., illus. Paper, \$12.50. Based on a meeting, Toronto, 1987. Also published in *Historical Archaeology*, vol. 26, no. 3 (1992).

Natural Selection. Domains, Levels, and Challenges. George C. Williams. Oxford University Press, New York, 1992. x, 208 pp., illus. \$55; paper, \$24.95. Oxford Series in Ecology and Evolution, 4.

New Symmetry Principles in Quantum Field Theory. J. Frohlich *et al.*, Eds. Plenum, New York, 1992. viii, 529 pp., illus. \$129.50. NATO Advanced Science Institutes Series B, vol. 295. From an institute, Cargèse, France, July 1991.

Organ Transplantation. Long-term Results. Leendert C. Paul and Kim Solez, Eds. Dekker, New York, 1992. xii, 416 pp., illus. \$145.

Organic Coatings. Science and Technology. Vol. 1, Film Formation, Components, and Appearance. Zeno W. Wicks, Jr., Frank N. Jones, and S. Peter Pappas. Wiley, New York, 1992. xxiv, 343 pp., illus. \$85. SPE Monographs.

Pancreatic Islet Cell Regeneration and Growth. Aaron I. Vinik, Ed. Plenum, New York, 1992. x, 187 pp., illus. \$69.50. Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology, vol. 321. From a conference, Norfolk, VA, June 1991.

Parallel Computation Systems for Robotics. Algorithms and Architectures. A. Fijany and A. Bejczy, Eds. World Scientific, River Edge, NJ, 1992. x, 247 pp., illus. \$70. World Scientific Series in Robotics and Automated Systems, vol. 2.

Reading the Book of Nature. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science. Peter Kosso. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992. viii, 198 pp., illus. \$34.95; paper, \$10.95.

Science as Writing. David Locke. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1992. xii, 237 pp. \$27.50.

Science Funding. Politics and Porkbarrel. Joseph P. Martino. Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1992. xiv, 392 pp., illus. \$32.95.

Total Engineering Quality Management. Ronald J. Cottman. Dekker, New York, 1993. xiv, 134 pp., illus. \$45. Quality and Reliability, 37.