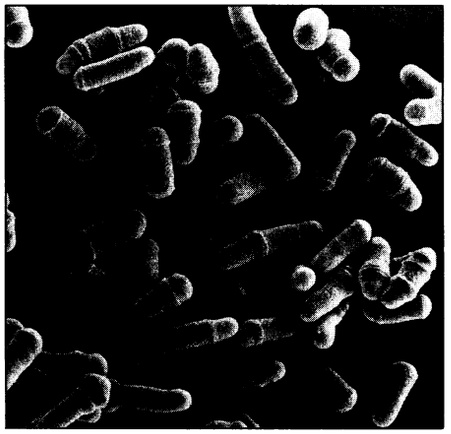

"This scanning electron micrograph shows a population of fission yeast cells. Note the uniform cell diameter, which makes it possible to estimate the mass of cells simply by measuring their length." [From *The Cell Cycle: An Introduction*; courtesy of N. Hajibagheri]

excellent framework for following current work in this fast-moving area. Here, as throughout the book, comparison of the embryonic and somatic cell cycles, as well as the yeast and mammalian cell cycles, serves to unify the abundant data into a coherent whole.

Overall, the book has an effective structure. The chapters build upon one another and guide the reader, often posing questions (for example, "How does the passage through mitosis release the block to rereplication?") and then describing experiments that have helped to formulate answers. But no one could read this book and come away feeling that all the mysteries of the cell cycle have been solved; the persistence of unanswered questions is acknowledged (for example, "Do G1 cyclins play the same role in mammalian cells that they do in yeast?"). The authors manage to convey a lot of experimental detail, both techniques and results, without assuming much background knowledge beyond basic cell biology. Instead of cluttering up the text with citations, they have ended each chapter with a mercifully short list of suggested reading that provides a good entry point into the literature. An appendix lists the genes involved (in almost any way!) with cell cycle control—certainly useful for those who do not care for alphabet soup. It would have been helpful if this appendix had been cross-referenced to the text, especially since the index is not very comprehensive. The book contains excellent and plentiful illustrations.

This is a very useful overview of our current understanding of the cell cycle. Newcomers to the field (including well-prepared undergraduates) will find it a good place to start, and researchers who work on the cell cycle and related problems should find the sometimes idiosyncratic Murray–Hunt world view refreshing and stimulating.

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