to say that it is sure to become an essential resource for anyone even remotely interested in the biology of aging.

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## Spectrometry for Biology

Biological Mass Spectrometry. A. L. Burlin-GAME and J. A. McCloskey, Eds. Elsevier, New York, 1990. x, 700 pp., illus. \$230.75. From a symposium, San Francisco, CA, Aug. 1989.

Biological mass spectrometry is a field that, for the most part, did not exist only 10 years ago. Mass spectrometry has long demonstrated an exceptional capability to characterize minute quantities of less complex molecular species, but most biomolecules are notoriously resistant to volatilization, which is the necessary adjunct to the production of gas-phase ions. The development in the last decade of a variety of techniques (MeV and keV ion impact, electrospray, and pulsed laser ablation) that can produce intact gas-phase molecular ions and structurally significant fragment ions of peptides and proteins, sugars, nucleotides, and small oligonucleotides has produced an explosion of interest in the use of mass spectrometry for biomolecular characterization.

This book, the proceedings of an international conference, draws together significant contributions from most of the major players in this game and does so in a way that makes it most useful, particularly for newcomers to the field. Most of the 36 papers contained in the volume deal with various aspects of the techniques and applications of biomolecular mass spectrometry, and together they provide a broad overview of the subject. These contributions are usually detailed and of high quality. Protein sequencing is particularly well covered, but applications to oligosaccharides, glycopeptides and glycolipids, nucleosides, and pharmaceutical problems are also discussed. There are also some contributions from people outside the field, both general overviews and discussions of specific problems, that take a biological rather than a mass-spectroscopic viewpoint. These papers retain a chatty style, complete with jokes of varying quality, which indicates that they were largely transcribed from tapes of the original lectures, with appropriate figures usually added so that the sense of the lecture can be followed. By getting close to the spirit of the talks, these papers enhance the volume.

Significant portions of the discussions that followed the oral presentations are included, which can be of great value in giving the newcomer a sense of perspective and a feeling for personalities that cannot be gained solely from reading the papers themselves. Attention has been paid to details: the book is printed in an attractive font, figures are scaled so as to be legible, references contain the full titles of works.

The editors mention in their preface that no graduate-level textbook in this area yet exists and express the hope that this volume will prove useful to students and newcomers to the field. I believe that they have succeeded in that endeavor. I recommend the book highly, both to new and existing practitioners of mass spectrometry and to those researchers in the pharmaceutical and life sciences who are not yet fully aware of the new power of this old technique.

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## **Books Received**

Accretion-Powered Compact Binaries. Christopher W. Mauche, Ed. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991. xxii, 474 pp., illus. \$54.50. From a work-shop, Santa Fe, NM, Oct. 1989. Adolescent Stress. Causes and Consequences. Mary

Ellen Colten and Susan Gore, Eds. De Gruyter, New York, 1991. xii, 330 pp., illus. \$42.95; paper, 19.95. Social Institutions and Social Change. From a conference

Advances in Core Evaluation. Accuracy and Precision in Reserves Estimation. Paul F. Worthington, Ed. Gordon and Breach, New York, 1990. xii, 555 pp., illus.

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Chemical Graph Theory. Introduction and Fundamentals. Danail Bonchev and Dennis H. Rouvray, Eds. Abacus (Gordon and Breach), New York, 1991. xii, 288 pp., illus. \$115. Mathematical Chemistry, vol 1.

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Dynamics of Polyatomic Van der Waals Complexes. Nadine Halberstadt and Kenneth C. Janda, Eds. Plenum, New York, 1990. x, 542 pp., illus. \$120. NATO Advanced Science Institutes Series, vol. 227. Series B, Physics. From a workshop, Castéra-Verduzan, France, Aug. 1989.

The Economic Organization of the Household. W. Keith Bryant. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991. xviii, 286 pp., illus. \$64.50; paper, \$19.95.

Groundwater Geomorphology. The Role of Subsurface Water in Earth-Surface Processes and Landforms. Charles G. Higgins and Donald R. Coates, Eds. Geological Society of America, Boulder, CO, 1990. xii, 368 pp., illus. Paper, \$60. Geological Society of America Special Paper 252. From a symposium, Reno, NV, 1984. Handbook of Mental Retardation. Johnny L. Mat-

son and James A. Mulick, Eds. Pergamon, New York, 1991. xvi, 672 pp., illus. \$100. Pergamon General Psychology Series, 121.

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Neotectonics in Earthquake Evaluation. Ellis L. Krinitzsky and D. Burton Slemmons, Eds. Geological Society of America, Boulder, CO, 1990. vi, 160 pp., illus. \$37.50. Reviews in Engineering Geology, vol. 8. From a symposium.

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A. Jackson *et al.* Geological Society of America, Boulder, CO, 1990. x, 139 pp., illus. + plates. \$36.25. Geological Society of America Memoir 177.

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the Soul of Science. Chet Raymo. Viking, New York, 1991. xx, 182 pp. \$18.95.

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What is Integrability? V. E. Zakharov, Ed. Springer-Verlag, New York, 1991. xii, 231. pp. iillige \$60.

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