The book has an incongruous "epilogue" by Michael Ashburner that muses on the history of the field. An introduction attempting to unify the disparate chapters around a common theme would have been more appropriate and useful.

The book itself is lavishly illustrated, with effective use of color, and comes with a 54-page paperback "Atlas of Drosophila Development" by Volker Hartenstein. In the 1980s José Campos-Ortega and Hartenstein produced The Embryonic Development of Drosophila melanogaster, which became the standard reference on fly embryos. Hartenstein has now gone further, using computer graphics and vivid color to display the developing animal in all its glory. Now I can identify those bristles and bits of the adult I was never quite sure about, and all those tubes and blobs in the viscera of the embryos and larvae no longer are a mystery to me.

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