

# **HUMAN BIOLOGY**

#### BY

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SECOND EDITION

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## HUMAN BIOLOGY

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#### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The favorable reception given to "Human Biology" has made possible the publication of the second edition, and thereby given opportunity for a thorough rewriting and the introduction of new material in the main text and in the Appendix. The primary concerns of the author have been to bring the material up to date and to broaden the field under consideration by additional textual and illustrative material in general biology. The title of the volume might well be "Biology—Human and General." Considerable thought has been given to the selection and preparation of the new material, particularly in the new introductory chapter, which, it is hoped, will help to orient beginners in this field.

The inclusion of additional general material does not indicate any change in the main aim of the text as stated in the first edition, namely, the presentation of "the pertinent facts of biology from the vantage point of man, the most interesting and important organism in the world of life." Several new college texts have recently appeared with the same viewpoint—a fact indicating increasing interest in the human biology approach, following the publication of the first edition in 1940.

Particular mention should be made of the many new illustrations added to this edition, most of them through the generous cooperation of Professor J. W. Buchanan of the University of Southern California, to whom the author is greatly indebted. These drawings originally appeared in Professor Buchanan's "Elements of Biology," published by Harper and Brothers.

The editorial assistance of Yvette Gittleson, assistant editor of the American Scientist, has been of the highest value in the preparation of this manuscript, particularly in the extended consideration of the vertebrate nervous system. Jean Day Zallinger has redrawn many figures with special skill and understanding. Editorial and secretarial assistance has been efficiently given by Charlotte B. Emmer, Harriet C. Marsh, Helen K. Sandback, and Elinor R. Smith; and Mrs. Sandback has, as in the first edition, largely carried the heavy burden of the preparation of the Index. To all these and many others the author is glad to extend his sincere thanks.

George A. Baitsell

New Haven, Conn. September, 1950

#### PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

"Human Biology" endeavors to present the pertinent facts of biology from the vantage ground of the most interesting and important organism in the world of life, namely, man. Accordingly, the study of human biology involves a great deal more than human anatomy and physiology; it is essentially a humanizing of general biology in that attention is centered primarily on human structure and function rather than on the characteristics of types selected from the lower organisms.

At least two major factors have influenced the author to devote the time and energy and to submit to the trials and tribulations necessarily associated with writing and publishing a college textbook in biology. First in importance has been the increasing realization. year by year, that the great majority of students beginning work in college biology were, inherently, far more interested in acquiring knowledge about the human organism than they were concerning any other living species. Student interest in any subject is naturally expected to lead to increased endeavor. Nevertheless, the author has frequently been surprised at the efforts voluntarily assumed by interested students in collecting the available information relevant to some structural or functional feature of man. Of first-rate importance in this connection is the fact that scientific data dealing with mammalian physiology and anatomy are available in abundance, possibly to a greater degree than elsewhere in the biological field. more, this body of scientific knowledge, particularly when associated with the functional aspects of man, is being augmented continuously from the results obtained by many investigators in the best laboratories of this and other countries.

Second, the author has been impressed with the necessity of supplying new and vital material at an advanced level for the basic courses in college biology. Biological knowledge possessed by the students now entering college is undoubtedly greatly superior both in quantity and quality to that of their predecessors. By this is meant that a larger percentage of students take a laboratory course in biology before entering college and that the material presented in these courses is much more extensive than in earlier years. Any college instructor

who takes the trouble to examine the contents of various excellent and widely used biology texts for secondary schools and representative student notebooks covering the year's work in these courses will certainly be convinced that careful consideration must be given to the content of college courses in biology so that the students' interest may not be dulled and their time wasted by the repetitious study of laboratory types which have been carefully considered in an earlier course. Particularly is this condition important to the great majority of college students electing biology, for their major scholastic interests lie elsewhere and they will, therefore, take only one year in the biological field.

The central problem is evident: Shall the incoming students be reintroduced at college levels to a series of more or less standardized biological types, most of which they feel—rightly or wrongly—are well known to them from previous study, or shall the college course be built, for the most part, around materials previously untouched? It seems evident that a biology course in which primary consideration is focused upon the organization and activities of human protoplasm offers new and superior possibilities for the presentation of highly important material and for increasing student interest in the biological field. If the human biology material is presented from a comparative standpoint, the student will learn not only the biology of man but also biology in its broader aspects, for man is a part of, not apart from, the world of life.

One example may be noted. The study of human nutrition cannot be completed until the photosynthetic processes of the green plants and the decay processes of the colorless plants are brought into the picture. The fact that the nutrition of every type of organism depends upon enzyme action gives opportunity for extended consideration of these organic catalysts which are involved in every vital process. And the same condition obtains with the other basic phenomena associated with the living state for, as is generally recognized, organisms perform the same vital functions in essentially the same way. They eat, grow, respire, secrete, excrete, react, and reproduce as a result of the activities of the associated cellular units of which they are composed. Accordingly, it seems evident that to "Know thyself" is not only an important and interesting discipline, but it may also be excellent biology.

In an endeavor to widen the scope of the book, so that the interested student may have abundant material to pursue important fields of interest at advanced levels, an Appendix has been supplied containing direct quotations from the publications of various authorities. It is hoped that this material will prove to be highly stimulating to instructor and student and, at the same time, provide reference to a noteworthy list of books for additional collateral reading. Original material by the author has also been included in the Appendix when it was felt that its content tended to mar the continuity and appropriate level of the main text.

George A. Baitsell

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Special mention should also be made of textual and illustrative material obtained from various publications of the McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. These illustrations are designated in the legend by the author's name only, and comprise all those not otherwise credited. This material has been taken from the following McGraw-Hill publications: "Fundamentals of Biology," by Haupt; "An Introduction to Botany," by Haupt; "The Invertebrates, Protozoa through Ctenophora," by Hyman; "Microbiology," by Lutman; "General Physiology," by Mitchell; "Laboratory Studies in Zoology," by Reed and Young; "Textbook of Comparative Physiology," by Rogers; "Protoplasm," by Seifriz; "Introduction to Cytology," by Sharp; "Evolution," by Shull; "Heredity," by Shull; "Principles of Animal Biology," by Shull; "Botany: Principles and Problems," by Sinnott; "Principles of

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# CONTENTS

Preface to the Second Edition					ě		V
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION	œ	,		.*			vii
Acknowledgments			160				xi
I. The World of Life		ų.	×			4	1
Living and Lifeless				ă.	2	¥	2
The Chemistry of Life	×	9	×			8	4
Cellular Organization	ÿ.		(8)	5	÷	¥	7
Colloidal Nature of Protoplasm		*	*				11
II. Protoplasmic Activities	:0	*		đ			15
Metabolism				4			15
Growth and Reproduction				i		4	21
Irritability and Adaptation						×	23 25
Movement						*	27
III. Organization of the Human Body					9		31
Cells and Tissues				1			34 42
Organs and Organ Systems				٠	*	*	44
IV. BIOLOGY OF NUTRITION (I)							49
Structural Aspects of Nutrition						Ŷ	49
Digestive System in Man	.0.	ê		ż	*	÷	50
V. Biology of Nutrition (II)	,	·	•	,	-	ķ	65
Functional Aspects of Nutrition					100	ı,	65
Digestion and Absorption							72
Photosynthesis		**		*		*	78
VI. BIOLOGY OF RESPIRATION	v		*		ų.		86
Structural Features Associated with Respiration .	*	8		2	20	3	87
Functional Features Associated with Respiration .	ŝ			2.0	œ.	•	100
VII. BIOLOGY OF SECRETION (I)	v						109
Glandular Structure and Function							109
The Liver							113
The Endocrine Glands	(*)						117
VIII. BIOLOGY OF SECRETION (II)		į.		,			121
The Endocrine Glands (Continued)						ĺ	
The Regulation of Rody Functions		-	*		ň		126

xvi CONTENTS

IX.	Biology of Excretion	136
	Excretion and the Skin	137
	Excretion and the Lungs	
	Excretion and the Liver	
	Excretion and the Kidneys	
	included the manager of the control	1.10
X.	BIOLOGY OF THE VASCULAR SYSTEM (I)	152
	Structural Features Associated with the Vertebrate Vascular	
	System	154
XI.	BIOLOGY OF THE VASCULAR SYSTEM (II)	173
	Functional Features Associated with the Vascular System	173
XII.	BIOLOGY OF THE SKELETAL SYSTEM (I)	190
	Structural Features Associated with the Skeletal System	190
XIII.	BIOLOGY OF THE SKELETAL SYSTEM (II)	209
	Functional Features Associated with the Skeletal System	218
XIV.	BIOLOGY OF THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM	224
	Structural Features Associated with the Muscular System	224
	Functional Features Associated with the Muscular System	
	•	
XV.	BIOLOGY OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM (I)	245
	The Peripheral Division	247
	The Autonomic Nervous System	254
	Conduction	
XVI.	BIOLOGY OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM (II)	263
	Sense Organs	263
	Sense of Hearing and Position	
XVII.	BIOLOGY OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM (III)	275
	Sense of Sight	275
	Sensory Function in the Nervous System	
XVIII.	BIOLOGY OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM (IV)	289
	The Central System	289
	Structural Features of the Central Nervous System	
	Integration	
		-
XIX.	BIOLOGY OF GROWTH AND REPRODUCTION (I)	317
	Types of Reproduction	318
	Development of the Frog	
XX.	BIOLOGY OF GROWTH AND REPRODUCTION (II)	341
	Development of the Chick	341
	Development of the Mammal	

CONTENTS	xvii
XXI. Biology of Growth and Reproduction (III)	
Chromosome Structure	
XXII. BIOLOGY OF GROWTH AND REPRODUCTION (IV)	
Germ Cell Formation	
XXIII. BIOLOGY OF INHERITANCE (I)	
Mendelian Inheritance.	
XXIV. BIOLOGY OF INHERITANCE (II)	
Linkage of Genes	
Mutations	
XXV. Human Heredity (I)	
Inherited Characteristics	
Blood Groups	452
XXVI. Human Heredity (II)	
Inbreeding	464
Eugenics: Negative and Positive	
XXVII. THE WEB OF LIFE (I)	
Heterotrophic Organisms	478
Basic Requirements for Life	
XXVIII. THE WEB OF LIFE (II)	
XXIX. BIOLOGY OF DISEASE	509
Noninfectious Diseases	
Immunity	515
Epidemiology	
Appendix	
Index	691

#### CHAPTER I

#### THE WORLD OF LIFE

Biology is concerned with life phenomena of every kind and nature. We recognize life in the innumerable plant and animal organisms that are abundantly present in practically every niche of the earth, on land, in the sea, and in the air; and each of us, as a conscious human being, is aware of an inherent life principle that is associated with the many varieties of life in our environment. Life is known to us only in the form of completely organized units, or individuals. You are one of these individuals and so am I. Each individual in this world of life. whether large or small, simple or complex, plant or animal, is characterized by certain structural and functional features that distinguish the organism from nonliving material and also identify it as a distinct variety of life. The basic unity of design and behavior characterizing all types of life is due to the fact that the building material of man and of all other organisms consists of a life substance called protoplasm. In addition this unique material is the medium for housing all life phenomena, including nutrition, respiration, movement, reproduction, and the other vital activities.

Increasingly, as methods and equipment became available, scientists have attempted to solve the underlying problems associated with the nature of the materials, both living and lifeless, present in, on, and above the earth. They have developed broad and fertile fields of scientific knowledge, including the physical sciences (chemistry, physics, geology, and mathematics) and the life sciences, collectively known as biology and subdivided into numerous branches associated with the structural and functional aspects of animal science (zoology) and of plant science (botany).

The body of scientific knowledge now available through man's intellectual endeavors is very comprehensive and important and is continually being increased by further successful search for nature's secrets. Sometimes the new knowledge thus secured is spectacular in results and incalculable in its power and effect on man. A profoundly important example is now shown in the destructive release of atomic power by development of the atomic bomb.

Great discoveries in science rarely result immediately from research by a single scientist. Rather they are the cumulative result of long-continued investigations by many scientists. For example, there is a record of more than a half-century of research in nuclear physics, beginning in 1895 with the work of Becquerel, who first observed radiation phenomena, and culminating in the atomic fission of uranium in 1942. Then followed the application of these results to the war

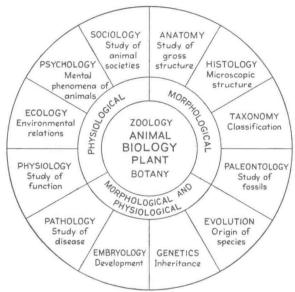


Fig. 1. The biological sciences. (Woodruff.)

emergency. In the years ahead atomic power, directed in the paths of peace, may well become the most important secret ever brought into the realm of the known by scientific research.

#### LIVING AND LIFELESS

Until comparatively recently it was not generally realized that there was much common ground between the materials of the inanimate world and those concerned with life phenomena. At present, however, the basic unity between living and lifeless materials is very apparent; it is, in fact, difficult to find the exact boundary separating them, even though at first glance the distinctions appear to be clear and to give every evidence of a definite separation. Everyone knows that sticks and stones, automobiles and houses are not living organisms, whereas beetles, birds, frogs, and men partake of a common life heritage. But