

synthesis. I suspect that the book will spend more time off the shelf than on!

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Plant Cell and Cell Interactions. Edited by I. SUSSEX, A. H. ELLINGBOE, M. CROUCH and R. L. MALBERG. Cold Spring Harbor, New York: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. 1986. 151 pages. \$27 paper. ISBN 0 87969 189 1.

This collection of 25 'short papers/extended abstracts' is based on talks given at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in October 1985. 'Cell/cell interactions' is rather misleading as a title, since the book is almost entirely restricted to those situations in which cells, 'born free', subsequently come into juxtaposition. The major examples of this discussed are the interaction of sexual partners (8 papers) and host-phytopathogen interactions (15 papers). Only two papers tackle the major question of cell/cell interactions *within* the vegetative plant.

The papers are brief (3–6 pages), telegraphic descriptions of recent work: some published or in press in refereed journals; some not yet refereed and therefore to be taken with a pinch of salt. This balance between review and preview is achieved by the various authors with varying degrees of success. Too often, the emphasis is on preview, so that the book will soon

be out of date. Indeed, many of the items of research described as 'in progress', etc., have now appeared in mainstream journals. However, for anyone who wants a quick taste of some of the research currently going on in the exciting field of non-sister cell/cell interactions, this book will provide one, although I cannot say that it is particularly good value for \$27 (without an index).

It is difficult to guess who this book is really aimed at – probably mainly the participants of the conference as a memento. At any rate, the book is likely to be preaching to the converted. Students and newcomers to the field are unlikely to make much headway owing to the large amount of background knowledge assumed.

Another point that will severely limit the book's usefulness is the fact that, officially, its contents are unpublications. The book bears the statement that 'the individual summaries ... should not be treated as publications or listed in bibliographies. Information contained herein can be cited as personal communication contingent upon obtaining the consent of the author.' This being the case, it is difficult to see who will take the book very seriously.

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