Volume 12 of the Basic Life Sciences, *Genetic Mosaics and Chimeras in Mammals*, is a tremendously valuable volume; however, it suffers from several significant drawbacks. Perhaps its greatest strength is the broad range of topics considered under the general heading of chimeras and mosaics. I was especially pleased to see a section on the mathematics of the subject. The quality of the individual contributions is generally quite high and this too is a strength.

The virtual absence of any contribution from developmental biology (e.g., Markert; Sanyal and Zeilmaker; A.C. Peterson; Dewey Gervais and Mintz; R.J. Mullen) is a disappointment as was the scanty treatment afforded chimeras and mosaics as a means of studying the clonal basis of development. This is contrasted with the section on X-inactivation which is often repetitive. Another major disappointment is the absence of any effort to compare and contrast the two different types of "patchwork" mice.

From a larger viewpoint, this is not a book which one can sit down and read cover to cover. The lack of editorial transitions is regrettable since one section does not flow into the next. Indeed, one paper does not necessarily follow logically from the one before. Thus, I would not recommend it to one who merely wanted to learn a "little something" on the subject. It is a valuable reference, however, for one who needs specific information in this field. Its breadth allows one volume to serve where many might otherwise be needed. I personally enjoyed reading it and gained much new knowledge from its pages.

**Karl Herrup**  
*Department of Human Genetics*  
*Yale University School of Medicine*

*Membrane Mechanisms of Drugs of Abuse*. Proceedings of a Conference held at Silver Spring, Maryland—March 16–17, 1978. Edited by Charles W. Sharp and Leo G. Abood. New York, Alan R. Liss, Inc., 1979. 272 pp. $22.00.

Volume 27 of the ongoing series, Progress in Clinical and Biological Research, includes sixteen papers which were presented in a small two-day research symposium and assembled under the following format:

I. Drug receptors, constituents and environment

II. Drug and neurotransmitter interactions with excitatory membranes

III. Drug receptors—effects of interactions

IV. Drug effects on membrane fluidity, conformation and ion interaction

V. Interpretation of drug effects through tissue culture systems

Clearly, laboratory investigation in the area of "membrane mechanisms of drugs of abuse" is of much topical interest. The experimental details in this volume included such diverse topics as mechanisms of action of certain drugs, both synthetic ones and their naturally occurring counterparts; however, because drugs ranged widely from alcohol, nicotine, and marijuana to the barbiturates and opiates there was little opportunity to consider any particular one in depth. The role of small molecular weight effectors, the characteristics of the associated phosphorylation of selected
macromolecular species, a definition of the properties of the relevant cell receptors, and evaluation of specific membrane alterations, are several of the topics which were considered. Various new methodologies and approaches were detailed, and significant contributions to the channelling of scientific thought were made by various authorities in the field. The contribution from Paul Greengard's laboratory deserves special mention for it describes the kind of thinking and experimental approach responsible for signal advances. The reader becomes instantly aware of both the problems and the progress in the field. Surely, such a gathering had the potential of generating rewarding discussion among the participants, for it is along the fringes of traditional lines of inquiry that signal advances are made and this has become once more abundantly clear in the proceedings of this meeting.

The question may be raised, however, and perhaps remain unanswered: What exactly does the recording of such a symposium offer? To the educated scientific reader, a well-researched review article certainly presents a fully up-to-date survey of the general area. To the researcher intimately involved with the field, the usefulness of this book might be severely limited, for the papers are of very uneven quality and the volume generally suffers, with conspicuous exceptions, from many unfortunate editorial mistakes and textual ambiguities. In addition, both delayed publication, which made many of the contributions outdated because of prior publication in the experimental literature, and a high cost of $22 make the reviewer hesitate to recommend this volume.

ZOE NAKOS CANELLAKIS

Departments of Pharmacology and Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine
and
Veterans' Administration Medical Center
West Haven, Connecticut

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN BIOMEDICAL ETHICS. Edited by John W. David, Barry Hoffmaster, and Sarah Shorten. Clifton, New Jersey, The Humana Press Inc., 1978. 300 pp. $19.50.

Bioethics is a hot topic these days. Rapidly expanding technology has generated new moral dilemmas as well as new therapies. There exists a striking lack of consensus among doctors, philosophers, lawyers, and health consumers on such important questions as euthanasia, abortion, the rights of patients, and the role of physicians. But there is no lack of books and articles on the subject. Most of these volumes, however, consist of compendia of articles considered "classic" in the field, and the degree of overlap and the dearth of originality among them is disheartening. Against this background, the value of the present volume is twofold: these are original papers, published here for the first time, and some of these papers are very good indeed. Two deserve special mention.

John Ladd's "Legalism and Medical Ethics," which opens the volume, is a sensitive analysis of the conflict between the ethical and jurisprudential approaches to bioethics. Ladd argues that most bioethical discussions have been overly concerned with legal rights (society's "instruments of morality") and insufficiently grounded in moral rights ("rights related to the category of relationships and responsibilities"). He makes a compelling case for the greater responsiveness of the moral analysis to the changing dilemmas of modern medicine. Whether or not one is in agreement,