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which is problem oriented) and that motivated more specifically by scientific or theoretical concerns ('little science'). The distinction between big and little science, he emphasizes, is not the same as between good and bad science. I agree, of course; there is no reason why big science aimed at solving great public health problems cannot be informed and even motivated by new scientific paradigms and cutting edge theory. But while I think this book is important reading for anyone doing research on human sexuality, I also think that the kind of sex research (big or little) it describes can benefit hugely from the theory and methods of human evolutionary ecologists, behavioural biologists and ethologists, of which there is no mention.

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Bioethics: The Ethics of Evolution and Genetic Interference. By Herbert Franz Mataré. Pp. 141. (Bergin and Garvey, Westport, Connecticut, 1999.) £41.50, ISBN 0-89789-461-8, hardback.

Evolution is not 'just a theory'. It can kill people if misunderstood. This book contains opinions that are dangerous, while becoming recently more popular in society. We live in times of increasing dominance of electronic technology and declining ethical standards. It is, therefore, most appropriate for a scientist who holds the first European transistor patent awarded in 1948 to write a book on the ethics of biological research and its applications. Unlike theoretical biologists', the Author's outlook is that of an engineer used to manipulating the natural world and to deriving pride from contributing to the technological progress of humanity.

For H. F. Mataré evolution is a principle encompassing the entirety of nature, from the beginnings of the universe through evolution of the star systems, chemical elements and compounds to the progress of living forms from simple cells to humanity and then through human history to an English-speaking sophisticated race. With this principle in mind, it is obvious to the Author that various parts of humanity progressed to varying degrees. One of the many reasons, according to him, is that the rate of progress of human civilization and culture remains in direct proportion to the number of wars. The more wars the better. Heraclitus's words 'war is the father of all things' provide support for this conclusion. Sadly, not all the leaders of humanity are aware of this fundamental evolutionary principle. For example 'Brainwashing and re-education in Germany by the Allies after World War II gave preponderance to German groups who detest those activities reminiscent of the Nazi era. Among those groups are the enemies of genetic engineering and modern medicine, of atomic energy and of most new technologies' (p. 56). It follows that were the Nazis not defeated all humanity would be much better off today. The 'imperative of the evolutionary updevelopment' (p. 99) provides H. F. Mataré with the basis for the formulation of ethical principles.

Humanity faces overwhelming multiplication of the 'less developed populations'. Enacting legislation that will ensure that only those people who meaningfully contribute to progress will be allowed to live and procreate must prevent this. For example, it may be highly unethical to preserve indigenous people who refuse to

adopt Western science-based culture and wish instead to preserve their 'superstition-based folklore'. Only healthy and intelligent human beings should be allowed to live while restrictive measures must curb tendencies to proselytize for cults that detract from science-based civilization. The Author states that '... churches' declaration that every [human] life is "holy" is totally untenable and naïve,' (p. 108). It is therefore unethical to spend money to save the lives of elderly or sick people, including children with serious malformations. Expensive medical procedures should only be used to save the life of a productive scientist or engineer. The ten commandments of the new brave bioethics follow. After expounding on the necessity to live in harmony with nature and to maximize technological progress, they state that human procreation must be directed, the gene pool manipulated and personal freedom and voting rights limited in inverse proportion to an individual's contributions to the progress of community that are determined by his position, influence and capability.

Many readers will recognize in the book a line of thought that brought the sufferings of the holocaust and apartheid upon millions of people and may wish to dismiss its arguments as belonging to the rubbish heap of ideas long proven wrong by enlightened humanity. Doing this, however, is dangerous. The Author is a well-recognized practising scientist, and in the age of peer-reviewed publication his ideas must be shared by a sizeable group of other scientists. This reflects the fact that the present-day academic community has failed to develop the culture of integrating new disciplinary findings into a broader context of the understanding of the world. Instead, we are applauding narrow specialized expertise and 'scoring' off trendy discoveries by people whose general education is purposely narrowed down to what seems to be immediately useful and economically efficient. No doubt, electronics and biotechnology are useful parts of our lives, but they are just small parts of the entirety of human knowledge. For a human biologist the most frightening message of 'Bioethics' is the realization that most biotechnologists and molecular geneticists may think like H. F. Mataré. To avert the danger we must strive to teach human biology in a broad context of other disciplines, placing emphasis on the deep understanding of biological evolution and social processes rather than on the isolated facts of molecular biology.

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Understanding Stepfamilies: Their Structure and Dynamics. Edited by Craig A. Everett. Pp. 196. (The Haworth Press Inc., New York, London, 1997.) ISBN 0-7890-1225-6, paperback.

This volume deals with the analysis of social and psychological problems in stepfamilies formed mainly after divorce and remarriage of one or both parents. It is based on literature reviews, as well as on original data of specialists in family studies – both clinicians and researchers – from different countries, mostly the United States, but also from Canada, Israel and the Netherlands. (Note: There is no such entry as 'adoption' or 'stepfamily' in the cross-cultural encyclopaedia *Marriage, Family, and Relationships* by G. J. Brown, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, CA, Denver,