which provides maps of promoter regions and the alternative splicing arrangements receptor genes.

The following three chapters discuss the biological actions of the cytokines *in vitro* and *in vivo* and take up almost half the book but do not have the narrative and impact of the earlier chapters. This is partly to do with the subject content but needs tighter editing to sharpen the reader's focus on the most important features of these areas.

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One World. The Health and Survival of the Human Species in the 21st Century. Edited by Robert Lanza. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Health Press, 1996. 325pp. $25.00.

This book tackles a very big topic. The editor, an American clinician-biologist, has assembled forty eminent contributors. The result is rather predictable: Some contributions are thoughtful, others are skimpy or platitudinous. One, by the Director-General of WHO, is embarrassingly brief and disjointed.

Among the many contributors —scientists, doctors, politicians and international civil servants —there is a distinct shortage of public health scientists. Hence, there is little population-based epidemiologically-informed assessment of future health prospects. Senior clinician-presidents of national medical associations wrestle with the usual tangle of political, technical and ethical issues that beset health-care systems. Famous laboratory scientists (Salk, Gallo, Montagnier, Pauling, etc.) contemplate a braver new world of vaccines, antiviral agents and age-titrated vitamin supplementation. But these are hardly broad visions of how next century's world might tackle the huge social and public health problems that several of the other contributors identify —our burgeoning population, widening rich-poor divide, uncontrolled urbanisation, destabilised natural systems, and indications that some food-producing systems are faltering.

The volume contains some prestigious inunctions by Jimmy Carter, Boutros Boutros-Ghali and others. Contributions by various national ministers of health are mostly self-vindicating, shackled by the immediacies of winning the health-consumer vote. However, there are some enlightening chapters that recognise the wider challenges to human health that loom on our horizon: Thomas Lovejoy explains the enduring importance of biodiversity to human wellbeing and health; T Adeoye Lambo (Deputy Director-General of WHO) explores the major threats to health from demographic, environmental and socioeconomic pressures and affirms that McKeown-Sigerist view of the primacy of social-environmental conditions as determinants of public health; and W Harding le Riche exhorts us to discard technological preoccupations: 'When we think of medical and scientific research, we should always think of them in ecological terms.'

There is a clearly-argued chapter by the British MRC's David Plastow and Dai Rees ('Goals for the Next Century'). They anticipate two major emerging influences: 'the health impacts of environmental change, both global and local, and the health impacts of living with social changes that will continue to occur with increasing pace'. While they foresee continuing important successes from the molecular biology stable, they also see a need for a wider-visioned and integrating 'post-reductionist' science, transcending traditional disciplinary barriers. Demographic changes will focus our attention on improved contraception, increases in infectious diseases, and an ageing-related shift in morbidity profile. Environmental—especially climatic—change is likely to affect infectious diseases, food production, and patterns of migration. Social change, especially urbanisation and its unprecedented fluidity of social relations, may augment socioeconomic and behaviourally-based health problems. They therefore conclude: 'health and health research must become increasingly central to the governance of our societies'.

This book, rather like DNA, contains many segments that are uninformative. However, there are sufficient information-and-ideas-rich loci to make it worth a browse. The topic alone surely justifies that.

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Symptoms of Disease in Childhood. By T J David. Blackwell Science Oxford, 1995. 281pp. £15.95.

Two books, *Common Symptoms of Childhood* and *The Normal Child*, by the late Ronald Illingworth stood out as classic texts which provided basic common sense information on children and the symptoms associated with their illnesses. This book by Professor T J Davis is a successor to *Common Symptoms of Childhood* and aims to list the causes of individual symptoms and to provide further information that will allow the unravelling of the symptom.

The book is divided into 15 main chapters within which there are 85 sections; the majority of chapters group symptoms associated with the major systems. The first two and final chapters deal with pain, eating and growth, and miscellaneous symptoms respectively. The lists of causes are placed in order of importance, with further classification by age or anatomical site when appropriate. These lists are compehensive and include unusual causes of a symptom; and features of the common and important (dangerous or life-threatening) symptoms are clearly described in the text that follows each list.