

- [Home](#) ▶
- [About SGM](#) ▶
- [News](#) ▶
- [Who's Who](#) ▶
- [Contact Us](#) ▶
- [Membership](#) ▶
- [Meetings](#) ▶
-
- [Grants](#) ▶
- [Education & Careers](#) ▶
- [Links](#) ▶
- [Site Map](#) ▶
-
-

Microbiology Today: Book Reviews:

CELLS, GELS AND THE ENGINES OF LIFE: A NEW UNIFYING APPROACH TO CELL FUNCTION

G.H. Pollack

Ebner And Sons (2001)

The publisher's hype on the covers of this book would appear to make criticism by mere mortals seem perverse! It is written in a style that either entertains or annoys, depending on the reader's preferences or even mood. Personally, I find the cartoons and occasional 'Disney' layout annoying. Do not, however, be put off by these criticisms. Most modern biology books are prescribed by our current excessive-peer reviewed mentality; this book breaks free and challenges many of the sacred cows of cell biology. The author treats the cell as a gel and believes that our current thinking on living systems is over complex. To my mind though, the chapter on the origin of life, like most of its kind, is less than convincing. Buy a copy, ignore the style and see if, as suggested by one of the cover reviewers, it becomes your 'scientific bible'. Perhaps not, but it certainly makes a challenging read.

Milton Wainwright, University of Sheffield

US\$27.95

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