

PREFACE

“To earn a degree, every doctoral candidate should go out to Harvard Square, find an audience, and explain his [or her] dissertation”. Everett Mendelsohn’s worldly advice to successive generations of students, whether apocryphal or real, has for over forty years spoken both to the essence of his scholarship, and to the role of the scholar. Possibly no one has done more to establish the history of the life sciences as a recognized university discipline in the United States, and to inspire a critical concern for the ways in which science and technology operate as central features of Western society. This book is both an act of homage and of commemoration to Professor Mendelsohn on his 70th birthday. As befits its subject, the work it presents is original, comparative, wide-ranging, and new.

Since 1960, Everett Mendelsohn has been identified with Harvard University, and with its Department of the History of Science. Those that know him as a teacher, will also know him as a scholar. In 1968, he began – and after 30 years, has just bequeathed to others – the editorship of the *Journal of the History of Biology*, among the earliest and one of the most important publications in its field. At the same time, he has been a pioneer in the social history and sociology of science. He has formed particularly close working relationships with colleagues in Sweden and Germany – as witnessed by his editorial presence in the *Sociology of Science Yearbook*. Less visible, but even more in keeping with the man, has been his contribution – both in person and in print – to the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. Whether in his own university, or at a broader level, Everett Mendelsohn has always acted on a global stage. He has contributed to the work of UNESCO and other international organizations, and has been honored by scholars throughout the world.

This volume offers the editors – both, former students – as well as other students and colleagues who number among the leading scholars in their fields – an opportunity to give thanks to a respected teacher and friend. The volume is divided into four sections, each representing an aspect of Everett Mendelsohn’s diverse career, reflecting some of the many areas in which his influence has been felt. Part I focuses upon the history of the life sciences, with essays on

subjects ranging from radical views of nature in the enlightenment to Mendelism and the rise of molecular biology. Part II continues with contributions to the social studies of science, ranging from the concept of science as social practice to the social movements in science of the 1960s and 1970s. It concludes with a reflection by one who, having taken his courses, and was inspired by his example, left academia for other walks of life. For Everett Mendelsohn, knowing the social roles that scientists play is central to our understanding of science. Part III therefore focuses upon the social responsibility of scientists, a topic of considerable interest to Everett from early on in his career. In Part IV, which concludes the book, a colleague reviews Everett's role and work in the Middle East peace process with the American Friends Service Committee – an important aspect of his life that has rarely found mention in print, but is well remembered by many who have never known him as a university professor.

For their assistance in the preparation of this volume, we are indebted to Mrs. Irma Morose of Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, who mastered so magnificently the challenging process of preparing camera-ready copy; to Ms Jill Barnes of the University of Sydney and to Everett's assistant Yuri Hospadar, who helped assemble the complete bibliography, published at the end of this volume. We also thank the staff at Kluwer Academic Publishers, especially Charles Erkelens, who saw the manuscript through the final stages of production. The index of proper names was expertly prepared by Kim Kleinman. The entire project was initially encouraged by Annie Kuipers, now retired from Kluwer. We are also indebted to Everett Mendelsohn himself, for agreeing to be interviewed in Oxford and Boston during the summer of 2000. It is a measure of the man that he would wish to be involved in the preparation of such a work, and actively so. We look forward to seeing more from his pen, as formal retirement beckons, and as new opportunities arise, for one to whom the very idea of scholarly inactivity is assuredly absurd.

*Garland E. Allen and Roy M. MacLeod
St. Louis, Missouri, and Sydney, Australia*

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Allen, G.; MacLeod, R.M. (Eds.)

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