

Science Literacy for the Twenty-First Century

epilogue by Nobel laureate **LEON LEDERMAN**

SCIENCE LITERACY *for the* **TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

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This outstanding collection of essays is authored by eminent scientists and science educators, including Bruce Alberts, Howard Gardner, Margaret Geller, Stephen Jay Gould, George A. Keyworth, Lawrence M. Krauss, Leon Lederman, Sheila Tobias, and James Trefil. It provides suggestions for enhancing science education in the United States and improving the standards of scientific literacy throughout the world. If current trends continue, in the 21st century, new scientific information will probably outpace the level of science education of most of the world's citizens. Nonetheless, all citizens in this increasingly interdependent global community will be called on to face many daunting questions that this knowledge will raise, ranging from the sustainability of our global environment to new moral dilemmas created by such technologies as cloning and recombinant gene therapy. As the world leader in science and technology, the United States, now more than ever, must raise the level of scientific literacy among its citizens to ensure that wise and responsible decisions about the uses and possible misuses of science are made. Unfortunately, our educational system is now suffering from a shortage of science teachers, and many of those already teaching science need to be better qualified. Furthermore, our science curriculum must be designed to teach our children to be conversant with and to think critically about the complex scientific issues they will face as adults. Finally, our high schools need to be in a position to offer all students a world-class science foundation, which prepares them to pursue scientific training at the university level if they so choose.

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