



BOOK REVIEWS

CALL FOR BOOK REVIEWS

The Book Review Editor welcomes volunteers to review books, maps, and charts for the *Journal of Coastal Research*. Please send a post card with your coastal interests, name and address to me. I will do what I can to offer you suitable books, but no promises. Please be patient as we have to deal with international mails.

NOTES FOR BOOK REVIEWS

One of the aims of the *Journal of Coastal Research* is to review a wide range of publications concerned with coastal topics. These will include not only research texts produced for the international market, but also more limited regional and local publications.

Each review will provide a synopsis of content and objectives (research, educational, commercial, etc.) of what the book is about and the target readership. This may then be followed by a personal appraisal of the publication's merits, be they good, bad or indifferent. Reviewers should try to make a positive recommendation of the book's value to the scientific community, but at the same time bear in mind the potential market and the price. Please try not to be too vitriolic in your condemnations or too fulsome in your praises without stating adequate reasons. Remember you may meet the author one day!

Normally reviews should be between 300 and 600 words in length, typed (in English) in the usual journal format (double-spaced, single-side, etc.). The Book Review Editor reserves the right to edit! Please provide full information on the book at the top of the review. Full information includes title, author(s), date and place of publication, number of pages, ISBN (or equivalent) number, and price. If the publication is somewhat 'obscure,' then please include an address from where it may be obtained. Remember that some people may try to order the book on the strength of your review and they need

all the help they can get.

Reviews should be submitted to the Journal of Coastal Research, Book Review Editor within two months of receiving the volume. Reviewers may keep publications they review.

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Introduction to Dynamic Programming,
Leon Cooper and Mary W. Cooper.
Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1981, 289p.
ISBN 0-08-025065-3 (hardcover):
0-08-025064-5 (softcover)

This book is intended as an introductory text, at the final year undergraduate or beginning post-graduate level. It assumes a reasonable background of mathematical skill. Fortunately it pays particular attention to worked examples, so that those without total fluency may still limp through the examples, acquiring enough grasp of the fundamentals to nod knowledgeably at the exercises. The text is designed to be used as part of a course — it is not intended for self teaching.

What is dynamic programming? Briefly, it is an optimization technique, or better, an approach to optimization. If a problem can be formulated into a mathematical model it may be possible then to separate it into a larger number of simpler components, which may themselves be solved in an optimal way. Assembly of these smaller optimal solutions gives an optimal solution to the initial problem. Naturally there are limitations to such an approach: it is not always possible to solve even the smaller problems; there may be too many simpler problems to solve — when the sheer computational