breeding. However, in a final chapter (chapter 11), these aspects of gamete and embryo manipulation are briefly considered in the frame of 'The future of micromanipulation and assisted reproduction' and this I consider to be a mistake. It seems unwise to give cursory coverage of such important issues without the proper sensitivity towards the dangers of the manipulation of human eggs and embryos and the social and ethical implications. For example, a page is given to transgenesis in the human and a paragraph to describe the approach to possible injection of genes into human egg nuclei without any consideration of the need or practicality of such genetic interference or the dangers inherent in this approach (inappropriate temporal and spatial expression, insertional mutation, disturbed patterns of inheritance, and the permanence of unforseeable consequences). To present gene transfer in the human simply as a technical possibility I think is misleading. It is true that scientists are not trained in ethics (although I consider it is time for ethics to be a compulsory part of scientific training and vice versa). However, I do think that scientists when reporting their work must make every effort to be sensitive to its social and ethical implications and to cover these aspects adequately.

Overall, I enjoyed reading this book. It is very nicely produced by Raven Press. I do not think it is of great interest to a general audience but it is a must for the library of every IVF Laboratory and Assisted Conception Unit and for all those engaged in micromanipulation in development with an interest in human reproduction.

MARILYN MONK

Genetic Diversity Among Jews: Diseases and Markers at the DNA Level. Edited B Bonne-Tamir, A Adam. (Pp 460; £50.) Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1992. ISBN 0-19-506817-3.

For social, geographical, or religious reasons population isolates occur, and within these there can be an accumulation of deleterious genes. This has been well documented in the Finns, the Amish, and the Jews. The study of these populations has taught us much about demographic influences on gene frequencies as well as the symptomatology and molecular pathology of a number of rare diseases. This well edited and comprehensive volume addresses such matters in regard to various Jewish populations.

Demographic changes in world Jewry are reviewed in a most fascinating opening chapter. From the time of Claudius in the 5th century, when it has been estimated there were between five and eight million Jews, the numbers have fluctuated considerably but with a progressive increase over the last 200 years. Moreover, the tendency for Jews to marry within a community (so called Benini's index) has been progressively falling in recent years. Furthermore, apart from Israel, there has also been an increasing tendency for Jews to marry non-Jews who do not convert to Judaism. The result of all these changes, if continued, will be to have a diluting effect on the gene pool. The present volume is therefore welcome before these changes might possibly have any significant effect.

The first part of the volume is concerned with polymorphisms (nuclear and mitochondrial DNA, HLA, G6PD). The next deals with mendelian disorders particularly prevalent among Ashkenazim (for example, various lipid storage disorders, dysautonomia, adrenal hyperplasia III) and non-Ashkenazim (for example, familial Mediterranean fever). The final part addresses multifactorial diseases which may be particularly common in certain Jewish communities, including coronary artery disease and idiopathic inflammatory bowel diseases.

This volume is dedicated to Richard Goodman MD (1932–1989) who was Professor of Human Genetics at Tel-Aviv University and who contributed so much in various ways to medical genetics, but particularly to the study of genetic disorders among Jews. Richard was a personal friend of mine for nearly 30 years and I know he would have been very proud to be associated with such a valuable work of scholarship.

ALAN EMERY

Mendelian Inheritance in Man. 10th edition, 2 volumes. Victor A McKusick. ($94.00.) Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1992.

For a book to go through 10 editions over a 26 year period with the same author must be a rare event. For it to be increasingly valuable with successive editions is even more unusual. *Mendelian Inheritance in Man* has become such an essential part of both clinical practice and research in medical genetics that it must seem ungrateful, even disloyal, to criticise it, yet this tenth edition has shown up weaknesses that must be corrected if its future is to remain assured. These were already noted in reviewing the 9th edition, but are now even more prominent.

The edition is produced for the first time in two volumes (a total of around 2500 pages compared with rather under 2200 for the previous edition). The preliminary section contains, as before, much interesting and valuable material, including citation indices, a table of numbers of genes mapped, a list of molecular defects in mendelian disorders, and detailed tables of mapped genes by chromosome, along with the renowned chromosome maps of 'morbid anatomy' of the human genome. The detailed entries (autosomal recessive and X linked disorders now occupy volume 2) are remarkably up to date, and form a collection of notes and references on rare mendelian disorders that is quite unparalleled in its scope.

So what is my criticism? Quite simply it lies in what has *not* been removed in successive editions. The entries read increasingly as a series of geological strata, showing accretion but very little erosion. This has now reached the stage where it is difficult to find the statements and references that are either new, or old but standing the test of time, among a large mass of material that has become dated and, inevitably in some cases, incorrect. Checking a number of entries shows that very little has in fact been removed, and it is this, rather than true growth in knowledge, that accounts for most of the increase in bulk.

What can be done to remedy the situation? The answer is simple in principle, but will represent an onerous task for Dr McKusick – perhaps even more so for his two assistants. They need to go through the text ruthlessly with a red pencil (or its computer equivalent) and firmly delete all the material that is irrelevant – I would judge about half of the total. If this can be done it will make the book (and its on line version) much more valuable, especially for students who can easily be confused by older material which has since been shown to be wrong.

I suspect that a radical pruning may take two years' hard work, but I look forward then to seeing a slimmer and reinvigorated 11th edition – perhaps again in a single volume!

PETER S HARPER