sons, and another great service would be done by a less comprehensive book which dealt with the Comparative Method at an introductory level and was more accessible to biologists from the experimental fields. Within Harvey's Department at Oxford are also some leading developmental biologists. When they and the evolutionary biologists start talking to each other we can expect some real progress.

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Genetic Disorders and the Fetus: Diagnosis, Prevention and Treatment (third edition). Edited by A. MILUNSKY. The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1992. 992 pages. $125.00. ISBN 0 8018 4413 4.

The original edition of 'Milunsky' appeared in 1979, at the end of the first decade of the clinical application of prenatal diagnosis to chromosomal disorders, inborn errors of metabolism and congenital malformations. As a comprehensive summary of the state of the art it had few peers, and it became the reference text for genetic counsellors, obstetricians and laboratory personnel. More than half of the first edition was the personal work of Aubrey Milunsky, whose command of the literature was one of its most impressive features. In the second edition it became an edited work, and although this allowed expansion of topics covered, there was consequent loss of the unique Milunsky style.

The surprising feature of the third edition is how little different it is from the second, given the many achievements that have occurred in prenatal diagnosis over the last six years. It is even 15 pages shorter, for which some kind of ecological award should be made. Several chapters have been dropped – flow sorting of metaphase chromosomes, Rh disease and prenatal diagnosis and public policy. Two chapters have been added, on fetal cells in the maternal circulation and on fetal therapy. The main difference is that the sense that chapters had been thrown in the air and then ordered as they fell, which was such a startling aspect of the second edition, has gone. This is a logically organized book and now one has the feeling that Milunsky has the right formula and will stick with it. And so he should; this is a very successful book.

The main role that a reviewer should play in assessing the merits of a book of this nature is to rate it against the competition. Here I have a problem, because the only current alternative to Milunsky (M) is *Prenatal Diagnosis and Screening*, edited by Brock, Rodeck and Ferguson-Smith (BRF), and published by Churchill–Livingstone in 1992. Naturally I prefer the latter. I am tempted to do a Julie Burchill and tell you all about my book in this review of Milunsky, but instead I shall try a fair-minded comparison.

There are many similarities between the two, with M weighing in at 3 lb for its 880 pages and BRF at 6 lb for its 785. M costs £94 and BRF £95, the latter being printed on fine quality paper. M gives you 29 chapters and 47 contributors, most of whom are American, while BRF has a more international distribution of 71 contributors over 47 chapters. Given the amazing time that it takes a publisher to produce a finished product from a manuscript, it is gratifying that both books managed to include the cloning of the fragile X gene (May 1991), and unsurprising that neither could cover the myotonic dystrophy gene (February 1992).

I do have one personal gripe about Milunsky's book. He invited me to contribute the chapter on cystic fibrosis, but when I pointed out that I was editing BRF and would be writing the chapter on CF in that, abruptly withdrew the invitation. What offends me is that my replacement has produced quite the most pathetic account of the subject I have seen in a long time. Cystic fibrosis is one of the most important disorders for DNA based prenatal diagnosis and deserves better treatment.

The main difference between the two books lies in emphasis. M is an encyclopaedic tome and probably cites every paper on prenatal diagnosis ever written. Occasionally, this makes it irritatingly uncritical, but as it is primarily aimed at people who want facts rather than opinions, this does not matter too much. The laboratory scientists will find it a hugely useful book. BRF is conscious that it is obstetricians who control access to prenatal diagnosis, and who because of the growing powers of imaging techniques, actually do the lion's share of the practice. Thus BRF has a whole section on congenital malformations and is particularly strong on ultrasonography. I would guess that if choice between the two has to be made, it is likely that it will be geneticists and scientists for M and obstetricians and other medical specialists for BRF.

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The Biology of Mosquitoes, Vol. 1: *Development, Nutrition and Reproduction*. By A. N. CLEMENTS. Chapman & Hall. 1992. 509 pages. Price £69.00. ISBN 0 412 40180 0.

This book is an absolute must for any laboratory working on mosquitoes. It covers everything about their genetics, morphology and development as well as information on physiology and endocrinology.

It is a good mix of descriptive biology, essential for a handbook to be of value, and experimental studies. The diagrams and figures complement the text extremely well and the extensive reference list will be of great value to newcomers to particular areas of study.

Each chapter of the book is thoroughly researched and Alan Clements has gone to a great deal of trouble

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