ty is further added to by 'recombinational flexibility' at the points where the gene segments join together, and even further diversity is contributed by somatic mutations.

A little disappointingly the Dreyer-Bennett hypothesis, which many consider was seminal to ideas concerning the origin of antibody diversity, is mentioned only briefly in the text and does not appear at all in the index. Perhaps the book is also a little repetitious, though to those readers like myself who may be unfamiliar with many of the details, this can be helpful. The story is told in a well referenced and detailed yet interesting manner, and should appeal to many of those with interests in this exciting field of molecular biology.

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Birth Defects: Clinical and Ethical Considerations Annual Review of Birth Defects, 1982. Sponsored by the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation held in Birmingham, Alabama, June 1982. Edited by S C Finley, W H Finley, and C E Flowers Jr. Birth Defects: Original Article Series, Vol 19, No 5. (Pp xii + 240; figures + tables. \$37.00.) New York: March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and Alan R Liss. 1983.

This book is a report of the 1982 March of Dimes Birth Defects meeting which was held in Birmingham, Alabama. In the opening remarks the President (for Medical Services, March of Dimes, Birth Defects Foundation) widens the definition of Birth

Defects to include premature infants since "(they) are abnormal in structure because of their smallness. . .". This widened definition is necessary in relation to this book since although the title suggests that there is a definite theme and the contents are linked with each other, this is far from the case. The contents range from general to specific dysmorphology, from obstetric management of preterm labour to the effects of the New Federalism on delivery of genetic services, and from clinical application of restriction endonuclease analysis to discussion of granting of "greater moral status to the fetus". This heterogeneity of content means that it is difficult to know to whom the book should be recommended. In 234 pages there are 14 papers and 65 abstracts, so few of the subjects are reported in depth or detail.

Several of the papers deal with delivery of genetic and perinatal services and, while there are some lessons to be learnt, the details are not relevant to those of us outside the United States. I did find two papers valuable, one on high resolution cytogenetics by Yunis and Lewandowski, who gave a useful review of the subject for the clinician, and one which was scholarly and practical by John Fletcher, considering ethical aspects of prenatal diagnosis and fetal therapy.

The Birth Defects Conferences may benefit from the widened scope of subjects covered and professional groups represented but the published reports suffer from this change. There are valuable facts and discussions contained within the volume but it cannot be recommended for personal purchase though specialised libraries should obtain a copy.

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