reports and unexciting review articles. Editorial review could have been exercised more. There is a vast number of spelling errors, even allowing for the hasty production. The book is designed to appeal to a wide readership; I am not certain whether any particular specialist, including the clinical geneticist, will find this book an essential source for reference.

I A HUGHES

Chemical Warfare Arms Control: A Framework for Considering Policy Alternatives

By Julian Perry Robinson. (Pp 116; figures + tables.) Stockholm: SIPRI. 1985.

This monograph is concerned with the Geneva disarmament process and sets out to give the reader an overview from which to begin thinking about the role of chemical weapons (CW) in the national political and defence fields. The book clearly delineates the problem, which is common to virtually all weapons systems, of pressure from manufacturing and institutional interests to deploy weapons for which there is no accepted military strategy. It also makes the point that such pressures are most often successful because of the real or declared difficulties of discerning the intentions and capabilities of the designated enemy. The justification is the by now depressingly familiar doctrine of like-with-like deterrence. As we have seen recently, the 'yellow rain' affair, which, true or false, reported mycotoxin warfare in south-east Asia, has heightened consciousness of the possibility of nerve gas warfare in Europe. As the book discusses, deterrence doctrine has lowered the expectation within the military profession that it will actually be called upon to fight. However, at the same time it has put a premium on increasing the horrors of war should it nonetheless happen. The book points out that, as judged from the open literature, the deterrence argument, which is crucial to future arms limitation negotiations, has not been subject to much rigorous scrutiny. However, the author admits that the problem of CW deterrence is not one that readily lends itself to objective analysis. The framework of arms control considered in the book is the barter model in which the principal actors are governments. The presumption is, accordingly, that all the factors that are relevant to the creation and operation of chemical warfare control are sufficiently controllable by governments. However, transnational corporations active in the chemical manufacturing industry and the commodious networks of communication within the world's scientific community are two areas which are seen as possibly being inadequately under government control, or

where there is inadequate communication with governmental agencies involved in the Geneva negotiations. The possibility that the mechanisms for achieving fuller communications could be improved, perhaps by non-governmental organisations, is seen as an urgent subject for further study.

The book is extremely lucid both in presentation and logic. It does a remarkably fine job of illuminating the baffling processes which underly both the development of increasingly suicidal weapons systems and the painfully inadequate attempts to bring them under rational control. It is a tribute to the author's balance and detachment in dealing with such an emotive subject that he avoids making his own recommendations but focuses instead on the issues. It is not a book which in any way falls within the area of medical genetics but it should be read by every concerned scientist, medical and otherwise, especially in view of the present decision about deploying American manufactured binary nerve gas weapons in Europe.

K W JONES

Issues and Reviews in Teratology

Volume 3. Edited by H Kalter. (Pp 299; figures + tables. £49.50.) New York, London: Plenum Press. 1985.

The nine chapters in this book cover a wide range of subjects including prenatal diagnosis, spontaneous abortion with normal karyotypes, twinning, chromosomal fragile sites, the relevance of minor congenital anomalies, epithelial-mesenchymal interactions in development and teratology, mouse trisomies, hereditary defects of the CNS in mice, and finally, the use of mammalian embryo culture in teratology. Occasionally the reviews are too superficial to be really helpful, but this is compensated for by others which present much useful information. I found particularly interesting the discussion of secular changes in twinning rates (Elwood) and the mouse analogue (trisomy 16) of Down's syndrome (Epstein). The latter is produced experimentally from the progeny of carriers of Robertsonian translocations. It would be particularly germane to know what might cause the spontaneous occurrence of this trisomy. What is known about the fragile X is succinctly and critically reviewed (Passarge and Schmidt).

These and several other reviews are likely to interest many medical geneticists. However, one suspects that the series might have more appeal if individual volumes concentrated on particular topics dealt with in detail.

ALAN E H EMERY