tion to velocardiofacial syndrome and DiGeorge sequence.

Therefore, we propose that the 34 year old male reported by Lynch *et al*[1] with velocardiofacial syndrome, cerebellar atrophy, and a 22q11.2 deletion may have the 3C syndrome. Molecular cytogenetic testing of patients with the 3C syndrome using chromosome 22q11.2 probes could support whether the 3C syndrome is an extension of the spectrum of features resulting from a deletion of 22q11.2 or a contiguous gene syndrome. These molecular cytogenetic studies have been initiated.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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**Non-Isotopic Methods in Molecular Biology. A Practical Approach.** Editors E R Levy, C S Herrington. (Pp 221; £27.50.) Oxford: IRL Press. 1995. ISBN 0 19 9634556.

Safety and environmental considerations have recently encouraged the replacement of radioisotopic methods with the more recently developed methods that obviate the need for radioactivity. This slim volume assists this transition by providing both a general overview of some non-isotopic approaches as well as specific protocols to perform some common molecular biology procedures non-isotopically.

This book has a marked bias towards cytogenetic and histological techniques involving in situ hybridisation which is no bad thing given the dominance of such techniques in hospital laboratories. In this regard, there should be a ready readership for this book.

However, as a volume purporting to cover non-isotopic methods in molecular biology, entire swathes of the field appear to be either lightly covered or omitted altogether. While the omission of protein blotting may perhaps be excusable, the omission of non-isotopic sequencing (both manual and automated variants) and reporter gene assays leaves a huge gap in coverage that should be rectified. Similarly, the large range of non-isotopic mutation detection techniques used in the burgeoning field of molecular epidemiology was restricted to a single chapter devoted to DNA analysis using PCR. If anything, there must be a ready market for a similarly sized volume addressing mutation detection techniques together with, say, non-isotopic sequencing.

In summary, this volume admirably covers non-isotopic hybridisation techniques but falls well short of its ambitious claim made for itself in its title. Dare we expect its omissions to be made good in another volume shortly?

DAVID HUEN

**Human Molecular Genetics.** Tom Strachan, Andrew Read. (Pp 606; £29.95.) UK: Bios Scientific. 1996. ISBN 1-872748-69-4.

At last! A textbook of human molecular genetics. One volume which considers not just meioses and pedigrees, but molecular genetics in its many applications to the human genome. This is a beautifully crafted book in which a great deal of thought and effort must have been used to present a wealth of information in a very clear and readable format. The chapters of the book are organised logically and little previous knowledge is assumed. As the book progresses the material becomes more advanced, preceding chapters providing the information required to be able to understand the next topic. For readers with little background knowledge of DNA/human genetics the first three chapters of the book provide an introduction to DNA, chromosomes, and pedigree structures. In these chapters, and throughout the book, the authors are careful to point out when definitions or theories remain the subject of debate. Students will not be lulled into a false sense that all the information presented is absolute fact. The next three chapters describe the principles and applications of cloning and nucleic acid hybridisation. The authors then highlight chapters 7 to 10 (which consider the structure, function, evolution, and mutational instability of the human genome and human genes), as those which differentiate it from other volumes. These are followed by a section on mapping the human genome that describes the methods used in physical and genetic mapping and then discusses The Human Genome Project. Next there are chapters in which disease gene identification and molecular pathology are considered. Mutation testing in individual people and populations is discussed, for example, see table 16.7: "A test which performs well in the laboratory may be useless for population screening". Somatic mutations and cancer are reviewed, as are the theory and methodology for the study of complex disorders. The penultimate chapter considers studying human gene structure and function in cell cultures and the generation of transgenic animal models of disease. And finally? Gene therapy, ex vivo, in vivo, and using genetically engineered hammerhead ribozymes, among others.

Why is this such a good textbook? It provides a comprehensive overview of the area. It is easy to read and understand. The index works. It conveys the enthusiasm of the authors for their subject matter. There are relevant references. It is concise, explaining principles with well chosen examples. The excitement of working in such a rapidly expanding area of science is tangible. Succinct summaries of the main points of each chapter are highlighted in coloured boxes, a real gift if you need to cram for an exam or plan lecture material for the examinees.

In Box 13.2, "A guide to the Internet", the hard core computer nomenclature is brief and a warning is issued about information on the Web. It is not peer reviewed and therefore "It may be good, poor, bad or even maliciously misleading." A quick poll of reviewers in the laboratory (one or two have already purchased personal copies) puts this publication firmly in the excellent category. We all agree that it will appeal to a very wide readership including undergraduate and postgraduate life science and medical students, and professional molecular and medical geneticists. It will probably become a standard text for an undergraduate human molecular genetics course.

JO WHITTAKER

# NOTICES

**Seventh Annual Medical Device Technology Conference**

The Seventh Annual Medical Device Technology Conference and Table-Top Exhibition will take place on 18-19 November 1996 at the Swissôtel, Düsseldorf/Neuss. An essential briefing for all medical device manufacturers operating in the European market, this conference will provide delegates with a comprehensive update on the implementation of the medical devices Directives, focusing on current concerns such as technical standards, product liability, and environmental considerations. For further details contact Sonja Lloyd, Associate Conference Manager, fax: + 44 (0)1244 370 011.

**UICC Symposium on Familial Cancer and Prevention Molecular Epidemiology: A New Strategy Toward Cancer Control**

This symposium will take place on 14-16 May 1997 in Kobe, Japan. As part of a worldwide project of the International Union Against Cancer, this major international symposium will be the forum for examining controllable causative factors in familial cancer, evaluating markers of possible use in epidemiological studies and management, disseminating recent advances, and discussing ethical, legal, and social aspects. For details, contact the Organising Office (The Simul International Inc, Kansai Office, Kogin Building, Annexe 8F, 4-2-7 Koraibashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka 541, Japan. Tel: 81-6-231-2444; fax: 81-6-231-2447; Email: KYM04075@niftyserve.or.jp). Organising Committee: W Weber (Chair and European node), T Kitagawa (Molecular Epidemiology), and J J Mulvihill (North American node).