

Preface

The conception of this book and the groundwork were done by Amy Horneman. Amy has been a driving force in the *Aeromonas* field, which is reflected by her being known to many of us in the community as 'Aeromonas' Amy. It was natural for her to be the editor of this book. Unfortunately for us in the *Aeromonas* research community, her new position as the Director of Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics at the Veterans Administration Maryland Health Care System prevented her from editing this book. However, Amy had already convinced Horizon Press of the importance of *Aeromonas*. She laid out a plan identifying the major topics and got leading researchers in this field to commit to write chapters. So I would like to express my thanks to Amy for starting this work.

As the reader will discover in this book about *Aeromonas*, this genus of bacteria encompasses a very interesting group of bacteria that have something of interest to many different microbiologists. These bacteria are capable of causing disease in humans and fish, which can be food borne or acquired from the environment. In contrast, these bacteria are also beneficial symbionts in other animals. In addition, it has proven difficult to identify *Aeromonas* strains at the species level using standard biochemical tests, which complicates many different aspects. The sheer number of species contained within this genus is ever increasing. We now know of more than one dozen *Aeromonas* species and can be confident that more species are yet to be described. Perhaps a better knowledge of the taxonomy will aid in identifying the virulent strains. Over recent years there has been *tremendous* progress in understanding the mechanisms by which *Aeromonas* causes disease and the surface properties that can lay the groundwork for vaccine development.

I would like to thank all of the authors for contributing high-quality manuscripts that cover each of the topic areas in a comprehensive fashion. I would also like to thank Hugh Griffin, Melanie Woodward and other staff members from Horizon Press with editing the manuscripts and helping in the production process.

While science moves at a frantic pace and books are static in time, I hope that this book will provide the reader with an excellent overview of *Aeromonas* that will serve them as a valuable resource for many years.

Joerg Graf
University of Connecticut