The following two chapters 'Intestinal immunity to V. cholerae', and 'Pathogenesis and vaccine development' are standard accounts of the present state of knowledge, although, on examining the references at the end of the two chapters, with a considerable degree of duplication.

It is from chapter six onwards that the book truly adheres to the aims of the title, and provides very detailed and valuable chapters on the complex issues surrounding the ecology of the pathogen and the epidemiology of the disease. The chapter on the aquatic reservoir of cholera reviews field and laboratory investigations that have demonstrated the persistence of V. cholerae in the environment in the absence of human cholera cases. While much of the evidence is the well documented work of Dr Colwell (Louisiana) and Dr Islam (International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh), there is interesting historical data from India in the 1940s describing the persistence of V. cholerae in natural waters. The following chapter on 'Zoological microhabitats of V. cholerae' gives further evidence of the environmental reservoir of V. cholerae and concludes with recent data on the isolation of serotype O139 from natural waters.

Chapter 8, 'The geography of cholera', is a fascinating chapter, using cholera as an example of how geographical information systems (GISs) may be applied to infectious diseases. After a general introduction to the concepts and terminology of medical geography, and a review of the effects of both ecology and development programmes on cholera, the author describes a detailed geographical study in Mozambique linking environmental and human factors to the occurrence of cholera. The chapter includes thoughts on the possible effects of global climatic change on cholera, the impact of mass refugee movements and conflict on cholera incidence, and finally the role of sophisticated satellite-based mapping systems in cholera epidemiology.

The penultimate chapter reviews data on the fate of V. cholerae in waste-water treatment systems. In those tropical areas where cholera is endemic, adequate treatment of sewage, particularly in crowded urban areas, is essential if the cycle of transmission is to be interrupted. A number of important findings are summarised in the chapter, in particular the lack of suitability of faecal coliforms as indicators of the removal of V. cholerae, the impact of just one excretor of V. cholerae on concentrations in waste water, and the variable results that have been published on the persistence of non-O1 compared to O1 serotypes.

The final chapter by Professor Drasar brings together some of the main topics linking the pathogen ecology and disease epidemiology, and considers particularly the influence of environmental factors on viability and pathogenicity. While each of the chapters individually provides both thorough reviews of their subjects and stimulating arguments for further work, the book must be considered as a collection of separate reviews rather than a definitive text, for which the reader should see the volume by Barua and Greenough, published in 1992.

This book will provide stimulating reading for all those whose work encompasses diseases of public health importance. As a reference text, it will be of value to those particularly interested in the environmental ecology of the pathogen and the disease. It provides a clear analysis of the scientific arguments and evidence linking V. cholerae in the environment and the epidemiology of cholera in communities, information which is essential if control strategies are to be implemented successfully in those areas of the tropical world where the disease remains endemic.

P. Shears

Slide Atlas of Fungal Infection – The Set

This slide atlas aims 'to complement the text of the well-established book Fungal infection – diagnosis and management'. It manages this admirably and the organisation into sections subdivided by syndromes rather than taxonomic classification enhances the clinical usefulness.

The superficial fungal infections section is comprehensive, as is the systemic infection section. The addition of CT scans of the chest in invasive aspergillosis would be useful as this is becoming the diagnostic investigation of choice. The section on subcutaneous and unusual infections may be considered esoteric by some; however, I would urge these individuals to take note of Fusarium, Scedosporium and Trichosporon infections as these are the emerging fungal problems of the next few decades.

I was delighted to have the opportunity to review this collection, and the meticulous text that accompanies each slide is enlightening. Unfortunately, at £195 for 50 slides plus explanatory text, this publication is an expensive resource. Only departments with heavy teaching commitments and limited access to clinical material will be able to justify the £4 per slide overhead.

R. Barnes