

## Book Review

*Current Topics in Clinical Virology*. PETER MORGAN-CAPNER, ed. 304 pp. + 6 ills.  
Colindale: Public Health Laboratory Service, 1991 (£24.95). ISBN 0 521  
42710 X.

This 300-page volume is the second Public Health Laboratory Service book on Virological (and related) topics. The first, published in 1986, covered 12 topics; this one contains 14 reviews on different subjects, the non-viral ones being Chlamydia, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* and *Coxiella burnetii*.

It is a pity that the book itself is not of the same size as the earlier one and that for nearly £25 the covers are of non-durable thin paper. The absence of an index is I think excusable as the reviews are short and cross-referencing between chapters not relevant.

What of the contents? A mixture of the useful – varicella-zoster in pregnancy, Norwalk-like viruses – the informative – human viruses and water, Epstein-Barr virus diagnosis – the exotic – Hanta virus; and the interesting (although irrelevant) – mumps worthy of elimination? Without singling out a particular chapter for praise or criticism, which must be idiosyncratic, I find it off-putting when a chapter starts by referring to other recent reviews and follows this by stating that it does not intend to cover the subject in detail.

In general this book will find a useful place in all microbiological laboratories and should be read by microbiologists who need to be aware of developments in this ever growing subject. The need for review articles is unquestioned but whether there will be a role for a Third Public Health Laboratory Service offering or whether the market will be adequately catered for by the various 'review' journals now appearing, remains to be seen.

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