that work together to regulate the virulence regulon of \textit{V. cholerae} and biofilm formation are clearly described in the relevant chapters (chapters 5, 7, and 9).

The identification of environmental and pathogenic multidrug-resistant \textit{V. cholerae} variants is another sobering reminder of the rise in antibiotic resistance among bacteria. In this case, the genomic plasticity of \textit{V. cholerae} makes the search for an effective antimicrobial agent more difficult. However, there is growing evidence that lytic bacteriophages may be important in limiting its epidemic cycle. Seven filamentous phages have been identified in association with different \textit{V. cholerae} isolates. The life cycle and evolution of the lysogenic phage, CTX\text{\text{\textregistered}}, which encodes cholera toxin is elaborated upon further in chapter 4.

The recent emergence of pathogenic clones of non-O1, non-O139 \textit{V. cholerae} strains reinforces the need for continued surveillance of this bacterium. Overall, the book is a valuable compendium for researchers wishing to have quick access to the latest findings regarding a bacterium that serves as a paradigm for extracellular pathogens.

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\textbf{Forgotten People, Forgotten Diseases}


In this relatively short (165 pages of text) book, the author discusses the impact of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), which are found mainly among the poor in Third World and developing countries. These diseases are not “emerging,” having been around for centuries, and, since they are found relatively rarely in the developed world, are not “sexy” enough to find their way into the media. Approximately 530,000 persons a year die from such diseases, a small number when compared to those who die from natural disasters, AIDS, or malaria. Nevertheless, although they typically have a low mortality, NTDs tend to be chronic and often stigmatize the patient.

NTDs include diseases spread by helminths, protozoans, and bacteria. The most common NTDs are ascariasis, trichuriasis, and hookworm infection, and are described by the author as “the unholy trinity.” They are transmitted through the soil and find a home in the human gastrointestinal tract. The author notes that close to 1 billion people are infected with these worms and that children are more often infected than adults. Chronic infections among children impair their physical growth, mental development, and school performance. The most effective method of control is the deworming of large populations with antihelminthic drugs known as benzimidazolone antihelminthics.

Schistosomiasis is most commonly found in the poorest regions of Africa. Again, children and adolescents are at greatest risk of acquiring this disease. Praziquantel is considered the drug of choice in treatment.

Subsequent chapters describe the filarial infections (elephantiasis and guinea worm), river blindness and trachoma, mycobacterial diseases (Buruli ulcer and leprosy), the so-called kinetoplastid infections, i.e., trypanosomiasis, Chagas’ disease, and leishmaniasis.

Most of the diseases mentioned to this point typically occur in rural settings. In the chapter entitled “The Urban Neglected Tropical Diseases,” leptospirosis, dengue, and rabies are considered. As opposed to mass vaccination of dogs against rabies in western countries, a major problem is the large number of unvaccinated stray dogs (e.g., in India and Bangladesh and urban centers of other developing countries) in areas where rabies deaths are high.
The chapter on NTDs of North America describes poverty-associated diseases including toxocariasis, toxoplasmosis, and giardiasis in the United States; trichinosis among the Inuit; and even elephantiasis in the Caribbean. Giardiasis and toxocariasis are most common, the number of cases of other NTDs being relatively low.

The last two chapters of the book describe the major organizations involved in NTD control and look at future trends in controlling these diseases. Organizations involved in the development of new drugs and vaccines are listed as are new drug targeting NTD’s developed between 1975 and 2004. Unfortunately, many major drug companies have little incentive to develop projects targeting diseases that exclusively afflict exclusively poor populations.

The format of the book makes it easy to read since the material is well explained and presented in an interesting manner. At the end of each chapter there is a list of summary points which condense the material covered, and easily understandable figures describing the life cycle of parasites are presented. A one-page appendix lists the NTDs. Besides a list of references at the end of the book, there is a section of Notes covering each chapter. Twelve pages of attractive color plates emphasize material covered in eight of the book’s chapters.

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