endocrine system. Some of the later chapters however are introduced with quite basic physiology, for example that of the development of the reproductive organs, which may be of interest to the student of physiology, but will be revision to the physician.

The book does give, however, a comprehensive and well set out, up-to-date review of endocrine physiology. It is an excellent reference work.

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Atherosclerosis Reviews. Vol. 12. End Points for Cardiovascular Drug Studies. Edited by Ruth Johnsson Hegyeli. Pp. xiii + 200, illustrated. Raven Press, New York, 1984. £58.50.

This new volume in the series Atherosclerosis Reviews, contains papers given at the Vth Joint US - Italy Symposium held in Rome in June 1983 in accordance with the US/Italy agreement for collaboration in the field of health and medicine.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with drugs which may induce regression of atherosclerosis, thrombolytic agents, anti-platelet therapy, the prevention of coronary artery spasm and anti-arrhythmic agents. The second section deals with end points and reports the effects of diuretic treatment of hypertension on plasma lipids from the MRFIT trial and the final results of the Rome project on coronary heart disease prevention which was another multiple risk factor intervention trial. The third section describes new non-invasive techniques which may contribute to the early diagnosis of asymptomatic atherosclerotic disease. These include B-mode ultrasound imaging of arteries and *in vitro* ultrasonic tissue characterization of atherosclerosis with validation of echo Doppler for the detection of iliac artery stenosis or occlusion.

The contributors include leading Italian and American scientists and physicians and the symposium addressed the problem of finding reliable but earlier biological end points that might reduce the time and the numbers of patients and therefore the huge costs of the present clinical trials. The volume is directed towards both research scientists and practising clinicians. It is a valuable review of the state of the art in the fields covered although it is already two years since the symposium was held.

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Handbook of Laboratory Health and Safety Measures. Edited by S.B. Pal. Pp. xviii + 391, illustrated. MTP Press, Lancaster, Boston, The Hague, Dordrecht, 1985. £59.95.

Hazards in hospital laboratories occasionally become news, as when workers have died tragically of hepatitis or smallpox, and the recent epidemic of AIDS has focused attention again on possible risks to laboratory workers. Forthcoming legisla-

tion on the control of substances hazardous to health will put a considerable responsibility on hospital administrators, laboratory managers and doctors who have clinical charge of laboratories to ensure that safety hazards are foreseen and that action is taken to reduce them. Dr. Pal's book is therefore timely. It is essentially a reference text, giving comprehensive information on hazards, biological, chemical and physical, that may be present in laboratories, and their prevention. The contributors are all themselves laboratory workers with practical knowledge of the problems they write about, and the book is a most useful summary of present knowledge. It is recommended reading for all laboratory workers and safety officers.

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Oxford Textbook of Public Health. Volume 3. Investigative Methods in Public Health. Edited by Walter W. Holland, Roger Detels and George Knox. Pp. 498, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, Toronto, 1985. £35.

The original work *Theory and Practice of Public Health* was first published in 1961 and Hobson was responsible for taking it through no less than five editions. In an attempt to keep this classic in the public eye, Oxford University Press has invited three distinguished academics to be the revising editors. Although they claim that one of the book's major strengths was its international nature and its links with WHO, one of their first decisions has been to narrow the focus to Britain and North America and cut its links with WHO. By ignoring the essential interrelationship and interdependence of different countries, and the increasing communication and movement between peoples throughout the world this revision suggests that the public health problems of Africa, Asia and South America are not relevant or important to us at all. The editors have decided to concentrate on presenting a comprehensive review of public health as it relates to developed countries.

The third volume is entitled 'Investigative methods in public health' and covers 498 pages. It is a curious mixture of the encyclopaedia, the scholarly, the eclectic as well as the zealous, the casual and the incomplete. There are six sections.

The first on 'Information systems and routine monitoring' (54 pp.) describes those of the USA and UK. They are unexciting but thorough and the chapter by Alderson contains a useful appendix on the official published sources of health information.

The second section on 'The application of information to health promotion' (34 pp.) contains two essays. That by Lindberg illustrates the problem of overdeveloped technology. He describes an information system, for example, as 'a set of formal arrangements by which facts concerning the health or health care of individuals are stored and processed in computers'. At a stroke that excludes most of us from even studying health issues. Lindberg's section on the evaluation of information systems is disappointing and even cavalier in its approach. Five techniques are mentioned, the market place, operational research, cost effectiveness analysis, cost benefit analysis and technology assessment. It contains such