



FIGURE 6.12. The great plate count anomaly. Plate counts of cells obtained by cultivation are usually much lower, sometimes by orders of magnitude, than those from direct cell counts under a microscope. Possible reasons are (1) the differing nutritional requirements of the organism, (2) the organism may enter a noncultivable resting state, or (3) the organism may rely on other organisms and thus cannot be cultivated in isolation.